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COMMENTARY

Do Silent Witnesses Defend Civil Liberties? — ALAN F. WESTIN
The Affair of the Finaly Children — NICOLAS BAUDY
The Plight of Our Culture — CLEMENT GREENBERG
A Young Frenchman Discovers America — MICHEL FOUGERES
Religious Modernism Stirs in Israel — JUDD L. TELLER
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The Juggler: Hollywood in Israel — NATHAN GLICK
Study of Man
How Discriminatory Are College Admissions? — MORTON CLURMAN

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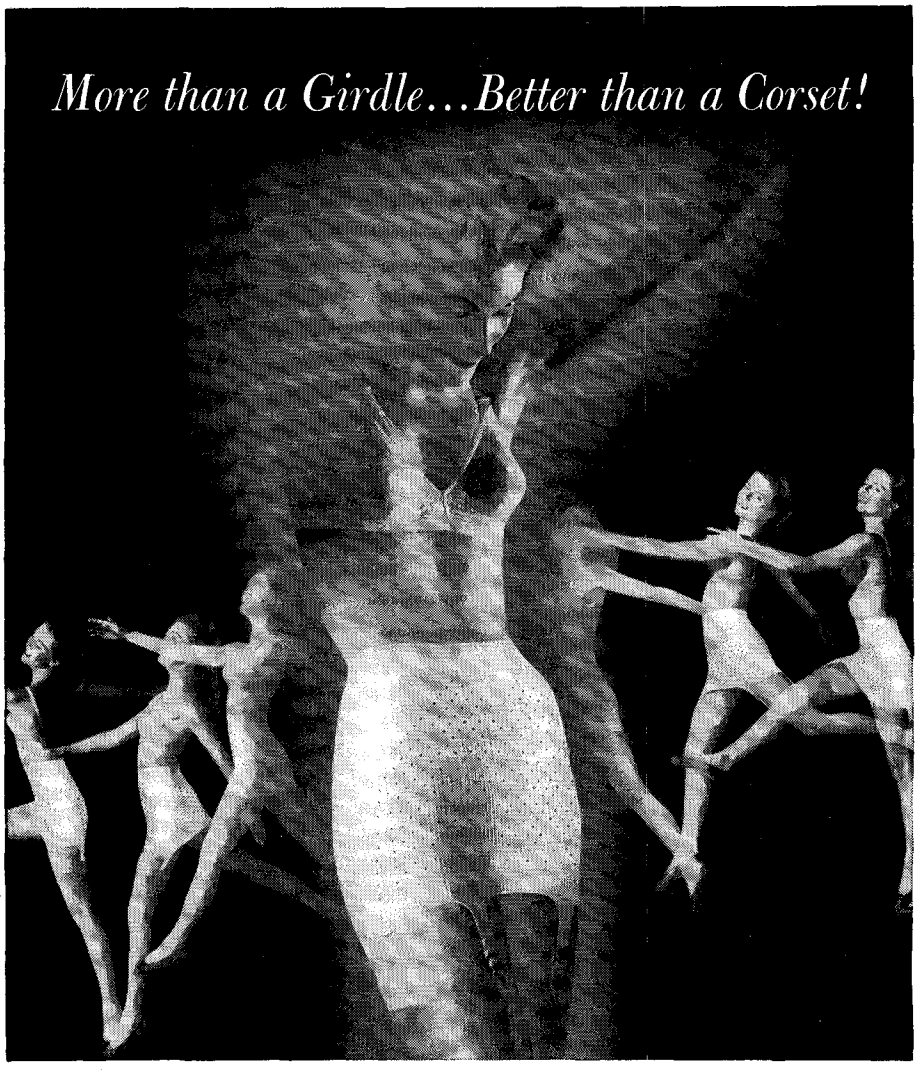

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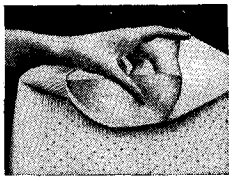

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COMMENTARY

JUNE 1953 VOLUME 15, NUMBER 6

Do Silent Witnesses Defend Civil Liberties?	*Alan F. Westin*	537
St. Helena *A Poem*	*Sol Stein*	546
The Affair of the Finaly Children	*Nicolas Baudy*	547
The Plight of Our Culture	*Clement Greenberg*	558
A Young Frenchman Discovers America	*Michel Fougères*	567
Religious Modernism Stirs in Israel	*Judd L. Teller*	576
Germany, Center of the "Peace Offensive"	*George Lichtheim*	584
Israeli Painting: After Twenty-Five Years	*William Schack*	593
The Box *A Story*	*Dan Jacobson*	602
From the American Scene		
We Advance, Singing	*Ruth Field Iglehart*	606
Cedars of Lebanon		
The Banquet of God	*Theodor H. Gaster*	613
On the Horizon		
The Juggler: Hollywood in Israel	*Nathan Glick*	615
Study of Man		
How Discriminatory Are College Admissions?	*Morton Clurman*	618
Letters from Readers		624
Books in Review		
Shame and Glory of the Intellectuals, by Peter Viereck	*Robert Gorham Davis*	628
In the Morning Light, by Charles Angoff	*Sylvia Rothchild*	632
Ancient Judaism, by Max Weber	*Ralph Marcus*	635
The American Temper: Patterns of Our Intellectual Heritage, by Richard D. Mosier	*Daniel J. Boorstin*	638
Such, Such Were the Joys, by George Orwell	*Irving Howe*	640

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

The Sundering of Israel and American Jewry *Maurice Samuel*

Disturbed at the many signs of a growing sense of apartness between Israel and American Jewry that many others besides himself have observed, the noted Zionist writer gives his analysis of the causes, and calls for a more understanding recognition of Jewish life here by the Israelis.

German Historians and the Hitler Defeat *H. L. Trefousse*

A historian samples ten among a spate of books in which German writers try to evaluate the meaning of the Hitler debacle. Not all of its lessons are taken to heart, but Mr. Trefousse finds very little attempt to whitewash the "Fuehrer," which augurs well for German reeducation.

Can Stalin Have a Successor? *Paul Willen*

Is it unrealistic to expect that anyone can automatically, or perhaps ever, don the mantle of Stalin and wield his power? The conditions that built his myth, says Paul Willen, can hardly be repeated, and the needs of maintaining his godlike position prevented any preparation for the succession during his lifetime.

Sacher-Masoch's Jews *Gerard H. Wilk*

An account of the stormy career of Baron Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, whose novel *Venus in Furs* won him the doubtful honor of giving his name to a sexual aberration, but who was also the author of numerous sympathetic fictional studies of Jewish life in Eastern Europe, stories which constitute, in Mr. Wilk's view, a more solid if less sensational contribution to culture.

The Cathedral and the Synagogue *Allan Temko*

In the 12th century, as work proceeded on the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris, which was to be one of the crowning expressions of medieval Catholicism, a less sublime aspect of that religious unity found its own expression in the expulsion of the Jews, the seizure of their synagogue, and the wiping out of a colorful chapter in Jewish history. By the author of "The King, the Bishop, and the Jew" (February 1953).

Bible Translation *David Daiches*

Our age rivals the Reformation in the number, if not the quality, of new English translations of the Bible. Mr. Daiches, noted critic and poet, scrutinizes some recent ones and tells how each meets and fails to meet the perennial challenge of the Hebrew text in all its variety and magnificence.

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COMMENTARY

DO SILENT WITNESSES DEFEND CIVIL LIBERTIES?

The Course of "Profoundest Wisdom"

ALAN F. WESTIN

The greatest obstacle to being heroic is the doubt whether one may not be going to prove one's self a fool; the truest heroism is to resist the doubt, and the profoundest wisdom is to know when it ought to be resisted and when to be obeyed.

—Nathaniel Hawthorne.

SINCE 1947, a lengthening parade of witnesses have refused to answer questions on their political associations before Congressional committees investigating subversion. Some of the witnesses have gone to prison, others have barely escaped contempt sentences, and many have suffered condemnation and reprisals. Most of these men and women claimed a constitutional right to silence to prevent their exposure as Communists; others have maintained that they acted altruistically to prevent cold war investigations from chilling any further the climate of American freedom.

This latter silence "in the name of civil liberties" raises in bold relief the dilemma posed by Hawthorne. What here is the "truest heroism" and what the "profoundest wisdom"?

Ironically, although these investigations focus on Communists, the Communist himself is completely unaffected by the conflicting moral, political, and practical aspects of the Hawthorne dilemma. His party's clandestine activities makes a policy of sealed lips a necessary tactic; the usefulness of "martyrs" to the Communist cause makes it an attractive one. The opening question to ask, then, is what sort of person would feel any conflict of alternatives if he should be called before an investigating committee?

FIRST, I would suggest, there are the former Communists. Entering for reasons of idealism, naivety, or social protest, seeking reform, adventure, power, or sublimation, they all met in time the pact or *coup* or purge or "scream in the night," as Whittaker Chambers put it, which led them to break from the party ranks. Although many of these former Communists repudiated the Communist party openly, many more broke from

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ALAN F. WESTIN, a graduate of the Harvard Law School and a member of the bar in the District of Columbia, here takes up the knotty question of the silent witnesses—those persons summoned before Congressional committees investigating Communism who have refused to testify, on constitutional grounds, and who have thus posed a ticklish problem for defenders of civil liberties. Mr. Westin was born in New York City in 1929 and attended the University of Florida. He has published in the Columbia and Yale Law Reviews, and in COMMENTARY, which last July carried his answer to Irving Kristol's controversial article, "'Civil Liberties,' 1952—A Study in Confusion."

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the party quietly, and now lead public lives as liberals or conservatives in which their previous conduct is unknown. For them, testimony as to the past could jeopardize their reformed existences. In addition, some former Communists, when faced with the loyalty oaths and questionnaires of recent years, unwisely chose to conceal their discarded association. For these men and women, admission of former membership could result in indictments for earlier false oaths. The former Communist begins the problem of silence, thus, with concerns of self-protection, to which he may add considerations of principle, depending on his present attitude toward the investigations of Communist activity.

A second witness who may be tempted to remain silent is the united-fronter, who may be neither a Communist nor a member of an organization listed as subversive by the United States Attorney General, but who is active in organizations which share some political premises with the Communists—the Progressive party, for example, or the National Lawyers Guild. The united-fronter is absolutely opposed to the "un-American committee"; he also believes (a) that testifying he is not a Communist or pro-Communist and being disbelieved may result in a perjury indictment of the Owen Lattimore variety; and (b) that testimony on his united-front affiliations might, under the widening criteria of the McCarthy-McCarran forces, become in time proof of *Communist* affiliations. For the united-fronter, then, silence serves for political protest and self-protection.

To anyone who has read the transcripts of current hearings, it is apparent that most committees investigating subversion have been calling as witnesses persons who are known, on credible evidence, to be Communist party members or former Communists, with only an occasional united-fronter being summoned. Yet, if we are to be logically complete, there is a third type of possible silent witness to consider. This is the liberal, a man with neither Communist nor united-front affiliations, but one who views the investigations as threatening *his* ideas and *his* values. This man fears that the march of investigating committees through such non-governmental areas as labor unions, public schools, and cultural media has already created, in Justice William O. Douglas's phrase, "a black silence of fear" in the nation. While believing that Communists must be kept out of government posts, carefully observed by the FBI, and tirelessly opposed at the ideological level, he also believes that legislative "circuses" and "propaganda sessions" create anti-liberal sentiment without materially strengthening our society. With Communists and the party line completely discredited in the nation, he feels that committee plans to probe into universities, churches, law, medicine, and journalism will only create a dangerous and distorted picture in the public mind.

Faced by this prospect, our hypothetical liberal may feel that it is time for men of courage to be conscientious objectors. Thus, the liberal tends to approve the silence of other witnesses, and should he ever be called himself—as a colleague of a suspected Communist or as a leading McCarthy critic—he may consider choosing silence for himself as well, even though he would be in no danger of self-incrimination. In this last situation, the witness considers silence only as a matter of principle, so that his choice becomes the sharpest of the three.

II

If these are the basic classes of non-Communist witnesses, what is the constitutional and political setting in which they must resolve their dilemma? There are four "ground rules" in 1953, and they can be summarized as follows:

(1) In the 19th century the United States Supreme Court declared that Congress did not possess any "general power of making inquiry into the private affairs of the citizen." In 1881, for example, the court invalidated an investigation of the suspicious financial collapse of Jay Cook and Company, even though the United States was one of the firm's leading creditors. After the Teapot Dome scandals during the Harding administration, this constitutional rule was modified by the Court. Congress may now investigate

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any subject which (a) provides information as a basis for legislation or (b) establishes that no legislation is needed; and a Congressional committee may compel testimony as long as its questions are "pertinent to the inquiry." (Under Title 2, Section 192 of the United States Code, a witness who refuses to answer pertinent questions is liable to a $1,000 fine and one year in prison.)

(2) The Supreme Court has not decided, one way or the other, whether the free speech, free press, and free assembly guarantees of the First Amendment place any limit upon the scope of Congressional investigations, or insure any right to privacy for political associations. (Lower federal courts have ruled that it does not.) In 1949 and again in 1953, the Supreme Court was presented with appeals in which this question was involved, but in both the John Howard Lawson and Edward Rumely cases the justices declined to rule on the First Amendment issue.

(3) The Fifth Amendment, providing in part that "no witness . . . shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself," does give a citizen the privilege of refusing to answer questions before a court, grand jury, or legislative committee where his answer might put him in jeopardy of legal penalties. This jeopardy must be of criminal punishment or forfeitures, however, and fear of damages to reputation or loss of employment have not been held to be within the protection of the amendment.

Prior to 1950, witnesses called before the House Committee on Un-American Activities did not usually claim the Fifth Amendment, but relied on the First Amendment or else flatly refused to testify. Because of this conduct, twelve witnesses (the "Hollywood Ten," Leon Josephson, and Gerhart Eisler) were sentenced to prison for contempt of Congress. At least twenty-one others (the executive board of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, George Marshall of the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties, and three bail-fund trustees of the Civil Rights Congress) received jail terms for failing to produce records subpoenaed by the Committee.

In 1950, the Supreme Court ruled that a witness who properly invoked the Fifth Amendment could not be required to answer questions relating to Communist party activity (*Blau v. United States*). Such answers, the Court declared, might tend to furnish "a link in the chain of evidence" leading to prosecution under the Smith Act, which forbids conspiracy to advocate the overthrow of the government by force. After the Blau decision, fifty-nine witnesses who had been indicted for contempt of Congress were released by federal decisions, all of which upheld a right to silence under the Fifth Amendment. In the past few years, hundreds of witnesses have claimed the protection of the Fifth Amendment, and committees now accept the claim as a valid ground for refusing to testify.

(4) Although witnesses who have properly invoked the Fifth Amendment before Congressional committees have not been convicted for contempt, official and unofficial reprisals have come to follow almost automatically upon the claim of such a privilege. The public—rightly or wrongly—has viewed the claim of Fifth Amendment shelter as an admission of at least near-guilt. This has led to firings in the cases of United Nations employees, New York and Boston school teachers, movie and radio personnel, and college professors from a host of institutions. Last year a California judge ruled that Warner Brothers could break its contract with screen writer Paul Jarrico under the contract's "object of public scorn" clause. A special committee of the American Bar Association has put forth a proposal that any attorney who claims the Fifth Amendment be disbarred.

III

GIVEN this setting, the years since the Hollywood Ten hearings in 1947 have produced three hypothetical alternatives which a "hostile" witness *could* choose to follow, each with a complete set of constitutional, political, and moral rationales. These positions need to be understood not only by a witness who may be searching for a personal code of conduct should he ever be called to

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testify, but also by the thoughtful citizen who seeks to understand just what principles have been put into issue before Congressional committees, and how he should judge both questioned and questioners.

The first alternative maintains that the privilege against self-incrimination should be used to register opposition to "McCarthyism" and to safeguard lawful but unpopular political activities. To those familiar with the origins of the Fifth Amendment, this will not be a novel proposition. In the 17th century, the English courts of Star Chamber and High Commission attempted to extract confessions of heresy and sedition from religious dissenters. From the opposition of Puritans, common law lawyers, and parliamentary supporters to these royal courts of inquisition came the British privilege against self-incrimination. This heritage from the mother country, coupled with simultaneous experience in the Massachusetts Bay Colony with the Star Chamber trials of Jonathan Wheelwright and Anne Hutchinson, led virtually all of the thirteen colonies, and later the Federal Bill of Rights, to include a provision against compulsory testimony.

Citing this history of the privilege as a weapon for religious and political liberty, and a guarantee against brutal or unfair treatment, the Fifth Amendment advocate urges that a man whose affiliations might endanger him—the Communist, the former Communist, or the united-fronter—should protect himself as the Constitution permits, especially since he prevents by his conduct any "inquiries into political belief" by Congressional investigators.

Thomas Jefferson, we are reminded, wrote to Benjamin Rush in 1803:

"It behooves every man who values liberty of conscience for himself, to resist invasions of it in the case of others; or their case may, by change of circumstances, become his own. It behooves him, too, in his own case, to give no example of concession, betraying the common right of independent opinion, by answering questions of faith, which the laws have left between God and himself."

Translating this from religious to political terms, those who hold this position maintain that present-day Jeffersonians should stand up for civil liberties by claiming the Fifth Amendment.

THE second major position maintains that, although one who would be incriminated by testifying can of course choose this Fifth Amendment line of conduct, this privilege has become ineffective as a means by which non-Communists can register any opinions before Senators, school authorities, or the public. As two distinguished professors of law at Harvard, Zechariah Chafee, Jr., and Arthur Sutherland, Jr., explained recently about claiming the Fifth Amendment:

"A refusal [to testify] may mean only that the witness has innocently got into a situation where he is apparently though not actually guilty of a crime; but fairly or not, the fact that he feels it necessary to refuse information to a government agency on the ground that it will tend to incriminate him inevitably casts a shadow on his reputation."

So, when a witness uses the Fifth Amendment to avoid the "$64.00 question," the average newspaper reader assumes that the witness is a Communist.

Since this reaction is a fact of cold war life, this position, which, following Hawthorne, we might call that of "truest heroism," argues that one should be silent, not by claiming the Fifth Amendment but by invoking the First Amendment. The defender of civil liberties should express opposition to investigations of political loyalty as distinguished from unlawful acts, and should assert that our rights as citizens to free speech, press, and assembly prohibit such inquiries. One who adheres to this view recognizes that it could entail a citation for contempt, since the First Amendment gives no constitutional right to silence under current constitutional decisions. But this citation would put before the Supreme Court once more its refusal to rule whether there are in fact any First Amendment bounds to Congressional hearings. There have been a number of signs that the judiciary is concerned over Congressional hearings. In a recent case involving Edward Rumely, the Supreme Court considered unjustified questions of a committee

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which fell outside the Congressional resolution authorizing the inquiry, and in another case concerning the Kefauver Hearings, a federal court of appeals ruled that questions which were not "pertinent to the inquiry" into interstate gambling could not be constitutionally required of a witness. Thus, if the issue could be forced into the Supreme Court, a favorable ruling for civil liberties might be forthcoming.

The First Amendment witness also suggests that the risk of citation for contempt constitutes only slightly more punishment than occurs in the Fifth Amendment approach. After all, a person who claims the privilege against self-incrimination will probably lose his means of livelihood and become a branded figure, yet he suffers these punishments without really denting public opinion on the question of loyalty investigations. A prison term for the sake of the First Amendment may.

To those who recoil from the suggestion of flat silence, considering it a violation of the citizen's duty to testify or a breach of the professional man's code of ethical behavior, the advocate of "truest heroism" would join the Fifth Amendment followers in replying that there may be times when it is the highest duty of citizenship to be silent. In 1857, Congress passed the federal law providing contempt penalties for those who balk at committee questions. The first case arising under the statute involved a select Senate committee assembled in 1860 to investigate Northern anti-slavery sympathizers who might be aiding the abolitionist John Brown. Since the head of this body was that less-than-impartial Senator from Mississippi, Jefferson Davis, the first witness (a Negro named Thaddeas Hyatt) flatly refused to answer the questions of the committee and went to prison. In 1676, an Englishman named Francis Jenks was called before Charles II for criticizing royal policies. Jenks was ordered to name the persons who had advised him, to which he replied:

"To name any particular person (if there were such) would be a mean and unworthy thing, therefore I desire to be excused from all farther answer to such questions."

Jenks's summer in jail, as Professor Chafee has noted, helped to pass the great Habeas Corpus Act of 1679. Thus, as the cause of freedom may be felt to have justified silence in these two instances, so the defenders of such a policy feel that resort to First Amendment silence is a blow for freedom.

THE third policy we have to consider would have a witness claim neither the Fifth nor the First Amendments, but would insist upon a "clean hands" doctrine as the only choice worth the consideration of the non-Communist who seeks to preserve our climate of political freedom. This, it seems to me, is, again resorting to the quotation from Hawthorne, "profoundest wisdom." It would reject silence as being an emotional luxury. A witness may feel that some investigators are committing procedural mayhem, and he may be repelled by the objectives of a Congressman like Senator Joseph McCarthy, who has said that he wants colleges "scrubbed and flushed and swept clean" of the "Communist-minded." Yet silence does not communicate these aversions to the nation but creates in the mind of most well-intentioned people simply the image of one more Communist or Communist echo cloaking his activities in the disguise of an appeal to civil liberties.

Perhaps, explains the advocate of this position, when the American Communist movement was widely brushed off as a pamphlet-peddling society in the Trotskyite or Greenback pattern, it might have been possible to talk of civil rights for all and be unconcerned whether the public saw that one was clearly separated in his ideological position from the Communist. But today, the common picture of Communism includes Korean war scenes and montages from the Prague anti-Semitism trials, with local snapshots of Alger Hiss, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, and a variety of other convicted spies. In this setting, it is not simply for appearance' sake but for conscience' sake that one who is not a Communist should begin his defense of such non-Communist values as academic freedom or political dissent by holding up his identity card.

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Therefore, the clean-hands proponent argues, the cause of freedom is best served not by silence but by free *speech*. Witnesses should answer the questions about their organizational memberships or actions, and then defend their current political positions before the committee and thus before public opinion. Should the Congressmen try to cut witnesses off after their first answers, responsive witnesses must protest and their protests would undoubtedly receive sympathetic treatment by the press and much of the nation. With their responsiveness to committee questioning, witnesses would couple a vigorous denial that their associations or beliefs make them unfit to teach, practice law, be a union leader, etc. In addition, open witnesses could strike a meaningful blow on behalf of their profession or institution which a policy of silence makes impossible. Consider, for example, the widely publicized interchange on February 26 between responsive witness Granville Hicks and the House Committee on Un-American Activities, in which Hicks was asked what he thought about investigations into education. Mr. Hicks answered:

"Well, for some reason, the emphasis in all these investigating committees always falls on the fact of how much Communism there is and never how little there is. . . . It seems to me I have been sitting around here for two days in which it has been demonstrated that there were ten or twelve Communists at Harvard fourteen years ago and that perhaps there is one still there. Now I would honestly think if you could just say to the public, 'Look, that's all,' instead of saying, 'Look how much that is; isn't that terrible?' you might do a good deal to allay the fear that is sweeping over this country."

Representative Kearney then replied: "That statement I thoroughly agree with."

This school maintains, therefore, that free and open speech is the way to dispel the existing public fear—fanned by the silent witnesses—that our country is helpless before a far-flung conspiracy. As another responsive witness, Professor Robert Gorham Davis, wrote in a letter to the New York *Times:*

"The investigations themselves offer a golden opportunity. There is much to object to in them, but in fighting for democracy and truth one cannot always choose one's battleground. The function of teachers is to teach, to clarify, to inform. The Congressional hearings offer teachers a captive audience of Senators or Congressmen more willing to learn than many people believe, and the widest possible publicity in the press."

So, advises the clean-hands advocate, the former Communist should admit his earlier associations, the united-fronter should openly fight for the views he holds, and the liberal should tread that gray path which has been his route ever since he renounced simple black-and-white.

IV

THE first position, that of invoking the Fifth Amendment, has been the one utilized by the overwhelming number of witnesses called before committee investigators. In the hearings on Communism in education held before the Subcommittee on Internal Security (Senator Jenner), forty-five witnesses from twelve different universities have (up to this writing) invoked the privilege against self-incrimination at public sessions, and many times that number did so in closed, executive proceedings of that committee. The transcripts suggest that most of these witnesses were Communists or former Communists. To my knowledge, no one except Professor Barrows Dunham of Temple University has attempted First Amendment silence* since the United States Court of Appeals upheld the convictions of the Hollywood screen writers in 1949 and rejected the First Amendment as a constitutional ground for silence. Quite a number of witnesses have chosen the third position—in education, for example, professors from Smith College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sarah Lawrence, and other institutions. No witness has yet admitted that he is a Communist at the present time, and tried to defend that position.

*He also invoked the Fifth Amendment, but if he escapes legal penalties it will have to be on the basis of the First Amendment. There is some legal question whether he invoked the latter properly.

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I HAVE dubbed the clean-hands approach "profoundest wisdom" for the non-Communist, and it is necessary to defend that designation. We must begin, in considering this matter, by realizing that our major goal in defending freedom is not (or not only) a proper Supreme Court decision, but rather an atmosphere free of that public-imposed orthodoxy which, a hundred years ago, John Stuart Mill observed to be the real threat to liberty. No one argues against the right of Greasy-Thumb Guzik or Gerald L. K. Smith to have their sentences for contempt of Congress reversed by the Supreme Court; at the same time, most citizens do not rush forward to help these defendants into teaching posts or screen-writing jobs. As long as witnesses employ the tactics of silence rather than of defending what they believe, and their right to believe it, they will receive only that toleration which society and the Constitution reserve for the mobster or the racist—no more, no less. Witnesses who would be evaluated on a different basis must be willing to demonstrate by open speech that they are political dissenters, not conspirators. One of the most serious dangers of the policy of silence is that an already insecure public will be frustrated and frightened into accepting the ever-ready solutions of those ready to pawn liberty to buy security.

Of course, the central difficulty felt by many who would otherwise accept the clean-hands position is that it would probably require former Communists employing it to answer questions as to their associates. The law seems to be that once a witness testifies as to his own membership, he has waived the Fifth Amendment privilege (having "incriminated" himself), and cannot use it later to close off questions about persons he knew or knows. This critically important aspect of the testimonial dilemma was highlighted when playwright Lillian Hellman received a notice to appear before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Miss Hellman wrote the Committee that she was ready to testify fully as to her own actions and opinions, but she said:

"I am not willing, now or in the future, to bring bad trouble to people who, in my past association with them, were completely innocent of any talk or any action that was disloyal or subversive. I do not like subversion or disloyalty in any form, and if I had ever seen any I would have considered it my duty to have reported it to the proper authorities. But to hurt innocent people whom I knew many years ago in order to save myself is, to me, inhuman and indecent and dishonorable." Therefore, Miss Hellman continued,

"I am prepared to waive the privilege against self-incrimination and to tell you anything you wish to know about my views or actions, if your committee will agree to refrain from asking me to name other people. If the committee is unwilling to give me this assurance, I will be forced to plead the privilege of the Fifth Amendment at the hearing."

Miss Hellman's proposal was rejected by Chairman Wood, who replied that giving such an assurance would amount to "trading with a witness" and the committee would not bind itself in this manner. Given this fact of committee operation, Miss Hellman's proposal becomes in practice an argument for the Fifth Amendment silence proposition, and should be judged on the merits of that alternative.

A MORE appealing solution would be for a witness to answer questions about himself while refusing, without any Fifth Amendment claim, to name his associates. This refusal could have no legal protection. But a witness who replied to the committee, "I will tell you anything you ask about my own activities, but things you want to know about others you'll have to ask them yourself," while risking contempt citation, would not be creating the aura of *personal* conspiracy which attends the refusal to answer on the Fifth Amendment. To date, only two witnesses have chosen this line. In April, Irving Goldman (an instructor in cultural anthropology at Sarah Lawrence College) testified before the Jenner Committee that he had been a Communist and had left the party in 1942. He declined, however, to give the committee the names of persons he knew to be members of the party. A similar re-

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fusal to give full accounts of his associates was made by Professor David Hawkins before the Jenner Committee on May 8 in Boston. So far, neither Professor Goldman nor Professor Hawkins has been cited for contempt. It is likely that they never will be, or that if they were, a forceful defense of this position in the courtroom would produce a jury verdict releasing them. After Professor Goldman's testimony, the board of trustees of Sarah Lawrence College voted to retain him, stating that he was well qualified in his field and that his action before the subcommittee was based upon his personal code of honor, not on any intention to defy the committee. No action has been announced by the University of Colorado concerning Professor Hawkins.

DESPITE the initial attraction of this position, I would suggest that complete responsiveness is still the wiser choice. First of all, a former Communist should think twice before reserving to himself the decision as to whether his former comrades are *presently* dangerous to American society. As a former Communist, he knows at first hand that the devotion and discipline of the average party member makes him an instrument of party policy, and that this degree of commitment makes the Communist capable of executing directives which could jeopardize civil liberties and the national security. If the witness's associates have also left the party, they can say so; if they have not, then the former Communist must weigh a personal code of honor against the need for full disclosure in a free society under attack.

Second, if the witness elects partial (or complete) silence on the theory that this prevents him from being "smeared" or "blacklisted," he is in effect choosing to parallel the Communist strategy, which wants all witnesses to choose silence in order to camouflage the activities of Communist party members. To foster this notion of "standing together," Communist and united-front representatives usually lash out at the "renegade" and the "stool pigeon" and, unfortunately, some liberal opinion tends to hold a similar emotional cast, nurtured by the unsavory role of certain former Communists who have become professional mouthpieces for the extreme right. The former Communist would do well to steel himself to ignore such attempts to equate his testimony, as to his honest disenchantment, with the operations of the labor spy, the Gestapo agent, and MVD finger-men. Even as a matter of expediency, recourse to the First or Fifth Amendments leaving unexplained the evidence of committee counsel will be very costly to the ex-party member, whereas open speech and sincere explanation of his change in loyalty would be accepted by most of the nation, just as it was accepted recently by the trustees of Smith College, Sarah Lawrence, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Thirdly, if non-Communist witnesses are concerned about preventing unpopular groups and suspect ideas from being labeled as "treason against America" by an investigating committee, then they should ask themselves whether the only way to accomplish this does not lie in winning the right of suspect groups or individuals to exist unpunished by more than disagreement and condemnation, the standard price for deviation in the open society. The witness who destroys himself by silence to prevent the "smearing" of his associates or the "witch-hunt" into his groups cannot hope to accomplish this.

As Professor Davis wrote on this issue in relation to investigations of colleges, "speaking out" in full is the only method of defending one's institution and one's values:

"The price of speaking out is being willing to name others. No decent person likes to give such testimony, but some of the information obtained this way is essential and can be obtained in no other way. Those named have the opportunity, or should demand it, to speak out and the more candid their disclosures the less disadvantageous the naming of names will become in most individual instances. If these disclosures reveal, as I think they will, that the present influence of Communism among educators is slight, the ultimate effect can only be good."

It is a wry commentary on the civil liber-

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ties scene that the witness who chooses not to use the Fifth Amendment, but to speak out, often finds himself caught today in a deadly crossfire. If he does not actively attack the American democratic community, he is condemned by the McCarthys for not having really left Communism. Yet if he holds to his faith in liberal values and testifies truthfully about his former associations, honestly abandoned, influential segments of the population treat him as though he were committing some dirty deed or selling out the very cause of freedom. The "forever-tarred" response of the extreme right is understandable; it is a handy way to attack the entire open-minded community. The liberal condemnations are neither understandable nor defensible; in that they encourage silence and discourage speaking out, they do a great disservice to liberalism and civil liberties. If those who invoke the Fifth Amendment to prevent self-incrimination deserve to be protected in this right, even more do those who choose to speak out deserve to have their reputations and occupations defended by the liberals.

V

These current dilemmas about testifying rest, of course, upon the assumption that there are legitimate objections to be raised against the character of current investigations into subversive activity. All of the above discussion would be meaningless if Congressional committees were not presently the subject of almost universal dissatisfaction.

I do not plan, in this article, to go into all the reasons which give rise to dissatisfaction with some of the operations of some of the committees.* We are all familiar with the various abuses charged to Congressional investigations—and, in greater or lesser degree, we can find examples of all of them. There have been cases in which committees have given the appearance of being more concerned with liberal or unconventional thought than with subversive activities. The procedures of committees commonly do not give witnesses all the procedural rights which appear elementary to our American sense of fair play: a decent interval between subpoena and appearance; a right to counsel at all stages of the proceedings; information made available, preferably in advance, to a witness as to the evidence against him, and where feasible, the source of the information; a right for persons named in the hearing to appear and defend their name; some opportunity for an accused witness to cross-examine persons who accuse him before the committee; the right to enter evidence and statements into the record; the privilege of delivering, in person, if requested, a statement of reasonable length.

The picture of Communist influence which emerges from the Committee investigation generally tends to be exaggerated. Some hearings are designed to punish individuals by publicity, to use accusations as charges, and to serve as substitutes for a jury—and raise the question whether it is part of a Congressman's job, which is primarily legislation, to publicize a roster of suspected Communists for employers to discharge. Some Congressmen seem more concerned with headlines and votes than with information. And others seem indifferent to the impact legislative investigations may have upon sensitive areas of our society—upon schools and colleges, upon the way young people think, about the things people write and read.

All these things are, to some extent, true. All of them demand vigorous protest and criticism. But critics would do well to discard the all-or-nothing approach. Instead, they should follow committee operations with care and protest with care. All committees do not operate the same way, nor does one committee follow the same line consistently. Where a committee is investigating Communist activity, the critic cannot denounce it as attacking the New Deal. Where a committee, or any of its members or counsel, slips into a crusade against the "Communist-minded" or goes after "UNESCO-lovers," then the brakes must be applied.

Both critics and Congressmen could de-

* This discussion has focused on the response of the witness called before a Congressional committee; it would take another article to deal with the role of investigating committees themselves.

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velop more fully the art of *distinguishing*. Congressmen must learn, for example, that liberals are not Communists, and Communists are not socialists, and all Communists are not atomic spies. They could even train themselves to separate disagreement or flat error from disloyalty, and fundamental protest from subversion. Critics must realize that all Congressmen probing subversion are not McCarthys, that legislators can often be guided to responsible conduct by responsible criticism, that civil liberty is not a license to unlawful acts or deceptive techniques, and that all Congressional investigations into political operations are not "witch-hunts."

WHAT this article has attempted to suggest is that thoughtful techniques and carefully defined positions are essential for those who would provide a positive and meaningful defense of our civil liberties. Resistance to excesses of Congressional investigators is an obligation of citizenship which we can avoid only at great peril to ourselves and our society.

Resistance demands, however, that those who criticize accept their responsibility to be true to the facts about Communism, as well as to the facts about actual committee operations. It demands, too, that those who think they defend civil liberties when they denounce witnesses who have taken the position of telling what they know or knew of the Communist party, should reconsider whether their approval does not belong with those who speak rather than with those who remain silent.

Liberty has only rarely been defended by silence. In this country, at this time, I think it must be defended by speaking out.

ST. HELENA

SOL STEIN

IN THE beginning
God, in seven days
The earth and such
Then nothing.
A giant wombed
In the South Atlantic
Thrust his face
Through surface glass
Howled defiant
Words at water
Water water
Died. His mouth
Turned crater, his ears
Whirled the tide in basins
East and West, his nose
Arose a bulbous guide
To mariners. Oh seldom
Such volcanoes
Happen to the earth.
History rushed in.
Discoverer De Nova's
Ship chomped back
To Portugal, waves
Clapping the way.
The Revolution of the French
Came none too soon,
Napoleon
Right after. He burned
For worlds, was staked
To Helena. He said
"One must admit
The island is very small."
Death found it on a map,
Too far, too far. Sent
A shrug of loneliness
By British ship, removed
The body to the Invalides.
Geographers agree
The island lists,
Is sinking in the sea.

SOL STEIN's play *Napoleon* recently won the Dramatists Alliance award. His poems have appeared in previous issues of COMMENTARY.

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THE AFFAIR OF THE FINALY CHILDREN

France Debates a Drama of Faith and the Family

NICOLAS BAUDY

BETWEEN seven and eight o'clock on the morning of February 3, 1953, Robert Finaly, aged eleven, and his brother Gerald, aged ten, were carried out by unknown persons from the College of Saint Louis de Gonzague at Bayonne in southern France. Forty-eight hours earlier, the district attorney of Bayonne had been informed of their secret presence at the college, and Father Silhouette, the director, had been told to hold the children for the authorities. But when Mr. M. Keller, who represented Mrs. Rosner, aunt and legal guardian of the two boys, presented himself at the college at 8 A.M. on February 3, Robert and Gerald had disappeared.

The next day, the news reaching the French public, the "Finaly Case" was born. The kidnapping of the two children, as a common law crime, was a matter for the Court of Assizes, but the unusual implications of this particular case of kidnapping rapidly began to overshadow the crime itself. The French term, *"affaire"*—one not employed indiscriminately in common newspaper usage—in a few days replaced the specific term "kidnapping" in the newspapers, in private conversations, and in public debate.

Who were these two children who became the stakes in a strange struggle that has pitted a sadly tried Jewish family against a woman some regard as a saint and others as a lunatic; Princes of the Church against the Grand Rabbi of France; Jesuit fathers, nuns, and members of the lower clergy against politicians; and French Catholicism in general against that section of the nation which invokes the Rights of Man and the laws of the Republic?

FLEEING Austria in 1939, Dr. Fritz Finaly and his wife Annie (*née* Schwartz) had found refuge in Grenoble in southeastern France. He was at that time thirty-three years old; his wife twenty-nine. Though he had been the head of a clinic in Vienna, Dr. Finaly, as a foreigner, was not allowed to practice in France. The couple lived modestly in La Tronche, a suburb of Grenoble, where two children were born to them during the war: Robert Michael on April 14, 1941, and Gerald Pierre on July 3, 1942. Dr. Finaly had both babies circumcised.

As we know, the Germans occupied the whole of France in November 1942. Until that time the Free Zone, in which Grenoble was located, had, in spite of Vichy's racial laws, provided a relatively safe refuge for Jews. Now raids and arrests began. Jewish men, women, and children were deported to camps in Poland. In January 1944 German police action was intensified, particularly in the southeast of France, where every suspect person was arrested. The Jews were the first to be rounded up, and had little chance of escape. The plight of the children was tragic. Those who fell into the hands of the Germans met the same terrible fate as the adults —in some cases even sooner, being poisoned or given fatal injections by Nazi orderlies.

As a precaution, the Finalys placed their two babies in the Catholic nursery of Saint Vincent de Paul, in a village near Grenoble. Some time later, on February 14, 1944, both adult Finalys were arrested, he in the streets

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NOT since the Dreyfus case has an issue affecting Jews stirred France as has the Finaly *"Affaire,"* which, after incubating for eight years, burst suddenly upon the world with the disappearance of two little Jewish boys in the southwestern corner of France this past winter. Public opinion in France, and elsewhere too, has divided into *pro* and *contra*, and much along the same lines as in the Dreyfus days. In the opinion of responsible people, however, too large a part of the feeling on one side derives from a plain ignorance of the facts, which is reflected in even the most enlightened organs of Catholic opinion both in Europe and the United States. NICOLAS BAUDY, editor of *Evidences*, published in Paris by the American Jewish Committee, here gives these facts, and throws needed light on the issues. The translation from the French is by Maurice J. Goldbloom.

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of Grenoble, she at home. Both were sent to the notorious Drancy camp, and thence deported to the East, after which nothing more was ever heard from them.

Immediately after their arrest, some friends, learning that the Gestapo was continuing its investigations and fearing that the children would be discovered, took Robert and Gerald out of the nursery of Saint Vincent de Paul and asked the nuns of Notre Dame de Sion in Grenoble to hide them in their convent, where several other Jewish children were being sheltered. The Ladies of Zion took the Finaly boys, but since their institution was an educational one, they were afraid that the presence of two children under school age would attract notice. So they entrusted the little boys to the directress of the municipal nursery of Grenoble, Mlle. Antoinette Brun.

Mlle. Brun's decision to harbor the children was certainly not taken lightly. The racial laws enforced in occupied France included ferocious penalties for helping Jews. Antoinette Brun was later to repeat many times that she had accepted the Finaly children "at her peril," and nobody would dream of denying it. What she did was more than charitable: it was heroic.

THE months passed, and brought with them death for some and suspense for others. The Gestapo did not bother about the municipal nursery of Grenoble. Some Jewish friends of the Finalys were able to escape the police and stay alive in France. Robert and Gerald grew older. At the beginning of August 1944 the German troops withdrew in disorder from Grenoble. The Finaly children were saved. On March 12, 1945, a letter from New Zealand was received by the mayor of La Tronche. It had been written on February 9 by Mrs. Margaret Fischel, oldest sister of Dr. Finaly and now married to a veterinarian. Dr. Finaly's original family had been dispersed by Hitler's annexation of Austria: two of his sisters, Mrs. Fischel and Mrs. Rothbaum, had settled in New Zealand, the third, Mrs. Rosner, in Palestine.

As soon as the inter-continental mails began running again Mrs. Fischel had tried to get news of her brother and his wife. She had not, she says, heard about them since September 7, 1942, the date of a letter—the last anyone received from him—that Dr. Finaly got through to a friend in the United States. The mayor of La Tronche wrote to Mrs. Fischel that the Finalys had been deported but that their two children were safe. The mayor had known Dr. Finaly personally, and wrote: "Your brother's dearest wish was that you should take the children in case of any mishap."

As it happened, Mrs. Fischel's letter to the mayor of La Tronche was crossed by a letter from a friend of the Finalys who had survived in France, a Mr. Ettinger. He told Mrs. Fischel of the arrest of the Finalys, and of their last wishes. Dr. Finaly had felt that Mr. Ettinger's fate as a Jew was as uncertain as his own, so had given over his power of attorney to a non-Jewish Frenchwoman, a Mme. Poupaert. She was the one who had taken the actual responsibility of placing the two children in the municipal nursery run by Mlle. Brun, and thus had the authority to get the children back and send them to Mrs. Fischel. Mr. Ettinger wrote: "Dr. Finaly and his wife, in the course of numerous conversations, clearly expressed the desire that the children be entrusted to you if anything should happen to themselves."

The evidence provided by Mr. Ettinger and the mayor of La Tronche is definite as to the desires of Dr. Finaly: Mrs. Fischel was to get the children. Moreover, she herself expressed the wish to take them.

AS SOON as she got Mme. Poupaert's address from Mr. Ettinger, Mrs. Fischel wrote to her. The mails were still slow at this time. On July 5 Mme. Poupaert replied. She had seen the children in the municipal nursery the day before. "They are," she wrote, "in excellent health, and the person who is taking care of them begged me to ask you to leave them with her. She is a very good woman who has already adopted five children. . . . The idea of parting with the children is very painful to her, since for eighteen months she has cared for them and is genuinely attached to them. As for myself, I do not want to advise you one way or the other. The doctor asked me to hide them, and afterwards to get in touch with you. . . . I hope that my letter will not make you unhappy; for I speak with complete frankness and no mental reservations; you alone shall decide what you ought to do." Antoinette Brun had poured out her heart to

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Mme. Poupaert. She had adopted five children, one of them Jewish. One of these five, a boy of eighteen, had been accidentally killed some weeks before. Her sorrow and the care she had given the Finaly babies deserved consideration.

Mme. Poupaert had received very precise instructions from Dr. Finaly, but from now on she remained prudently silent, confining herself to thanking Mrs. Fischel when the latter sent her a food package. Mrs. Fischel now wrote to Mlle. Brun, but had to wait until November 1945 for an answer. This answer was to become one of the crucial items in the *dossier* of the Finaly case. In it Antoinette Brun sang her own praises and called attention to her nobility in taking charge of the children. She made much of their health; according to her, they were still too young to travel all the way to New Zealand. She also suggested that certain objects of value entrusted to friends by the Finalys be sold "in order to pay the expenses of the trip."

She ended her letter: "No one had the courage to take them then. I took them, without knowing them, without knowing their relatives, their family; I took them without anything, almost anything. These are bonds of affection which one has no right to break just like that. Their money is nothing to me. But they are in a way my own little ones, and I am disgusted to see that people, so-called friends of the family, want to take them away from me in order to share their inheritance.

"I am French and Catholic; along with these two children I have adopted or received seven children whom I have raised as well as I could, with the fruits of my labor and my own money. The affection of my children is my recompense, I ask no other. Your nephews are Jews, that is to say, they have remained in their religion."

Six months before, on May 25, 1945, the Fischels had already got permission for the children to enter New Zealand. They undertook to pay the entire cost of the trip and offered to reimburse Mlle. Brun for all her expenses in caring for the boys. On that same May 25, M. de la Tribouille, Free France's agent in Wellington, mailed a request to the Foreign Ministry in Paris that the children be sent from France. Strangely, this letter remained unanswered for some months—as is shown by a follow-up letter from the French legate in Wellington, Mr. Gazel, dated December 28, 1945. What had happened? Official communications between Paris and French overseas offices were still undependable, and the functioning of the administration itself was still erratic. These factors were not propitious to the Fischels. As we shall see, Mlle. Brun took advantage of the delays.

In August 1945 Margaret Fischel wrote to the district attorney of Grenoble, asking him to facilitate the departure of the children. He did not reply. In October she sent another note to the district attorney, asking that the children be entrusted to her care. Again no response. Antoinette Brun was a power in Grenoble. On the local level she was able to block the steps taken by the distant Fischels, who were themselves immobilized by the slowness of the replies to their inquiries.

Finally, they got in touch with the French Red Cross through the British Red Cross, and a report by the Red Cross social worker in Grenoble, dated October 5, 1946, was sent to them. She wrote: "Mademoiselle Brun categorically refuses to hand over the children. She was named their guardian on November 12, 1945, in accordance with Article 142 of the Civil Code, which authorizes the establishment of a provisional council of guardianship when the parents of children are deceased. This article makes no provision for the case of other members of the family presenting themselves subsequently."

Thus, back in November 1945, at the very time when Mlle. Brun was at last writing her answer to Mrs. Fischel, she was also assembling a family council before a justice of the peace in Grenoble. Mlle. Brun was by that time perfectly well aware of the existence of Dr. Finaly's sisters, and in particular of Mrs. Fischel, since she was friendly with Mme. Poupaert. The family council that Mlle. Brun gathered together consisted of four Jews who had been more or less closely connected with Dr. Finaly but were completely ignorant of Mrs. Fischel's desire to have the children and the steps she had taken to get them. By concealing this fact from the court, Antoinette Brun was able to put the law of the Republic on her side.

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More months passed. On March 16, 1946, and then on August 9, Foreign Minister Georges Bidault sent notes to the Veterans Ministry, under whose jurisdiction the case of the children came. These two memoranda, based on information from the French minister in Wellington, gave a completely accurate and detailed account of the situation. The British Red Cross, which was to care for the children on their voyage, had multiplied its communications to the French Red Cross.

The Fischels did not know where to turn. For two years they wrote everywhere. The attorney of the French Red Cross advised them to appeal the guardianship judgment as formally defective.

In July 1948 Mrs. Fischel decided to give up her rights in favor of her sister, Mrs. Rosner, who was living in Gederah, Israel, and being nearer to France, could intervene more effectively. The Rosners gave their power of attorney in the matter of the children to a trusted friend, an engineer in Grenoble named M. Keller.

But who was Antoinette Brun? She was a native of Grenoble and, after a somewhat chequered youth, a lady of good works. She lacked neither courage nor enterprise. She was a Catholic, yet enjoyed the favor of the Socialist mayor of her city, as well as having numerous other intimates in the magistracy and the municipal administration. A fat, loud, expansive busybody, with an inordinate taste for quarreling.

People were somehow a little afraid of her. Behind the respectable façade of small-town life many scandals lie dormant. Antoinette Brun had seen her share of them. With the approach of age she had become devout, yet remained bossy, gossipy, and jolly. Only her charitable work gave her from now on an almost sacred halo.

She terrorized some people, fascinated others. Some people would do anything for her. Grenoble was her personal kingdom, her home. Later on she was able to act the role, superbly, of a woman in revolt against the powers that be. A short while ago she, the fervent Catholic, declared to *Figaro* that she didn't give a fig for the Pope. But before assuming the role of rebel, she made use of her influence with the powers that be with astonishing skill.

When she learned that Mr. Keller was preparing to recover, step by step, the ground she had conquered, she had the Finaly children baptized—as Mr. Keller learned from her own mouth in July 1948. The exact reason why she took this step has remained obscure. Nor was the act of baptism made public. Did she take advantage of the good faith of a priest, or did she find an accomplice?

Next, she called a new family council on January 24, 1949, pretending that the alternate guardian named by the first family council, Mr. Imerglick, had disappeared without leaving an address. Again, she was lying. Mr. Imerglick, who had sent Christmas presents to the children in 1948, subsequently showed the judges a letter of thanks from Mlle. Brun that showed she knew his address perfectly well. But for Antoinette these were mere venial sins, and the end justified the means. She invited a new set of people to the new family council, choosing them from among her own friends: a watchmaker in Grenoble, her deputy directress in the municipal nursery, her lawyer's clerk. They all took orders from her. Maitre Maurice Garçon, when he took over the case for the Finaly family, declared in court with regard to this episode: "Never has anyone seen the provisions of the law for the protection of minors made mock of with such effrontery."

On September 27, by virtue of the rights vested in him, Mr. Keller called a different family council, which assigned the guardianship of the children to their aunt, Mrs. Rosner, and authorized Mr. Keller to recover them. But Mlle. Brun refused to hand them over, and got the courts to annul Mr. Keller's family council.

Mr. Keller, who showed an endurance equal to every trial, assembled a new family council on November 14, 1949, in which the three aunts—Mrs. Fischel, Mrs. Rosner, and Mrs. Rothbaum—were represented. After taking three weeks to consider the question, the judge named Mrs. Rosner guardian, and ordered Mlle. Brun to hand over the children.

Later, after the kidnapping of the children, the big newspapers all reported as a fact the main claim of Mlle. Brun and her supporters that the relatives had not

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bothered themselves about the children until five years after the liberation of France. Borne up on a flood of articles written to order, Antoinette Brun became a Lady of Seven Sorrows from whom an ungrateful family, moved solely by religious and national fanaticism, was snatching the beloved children who had grown up in her bosom. It took the persistence of lawyers Maurice Garçon and David Lambert, the patience of Mr. Keller, and the day by day work of some honest reporters to acquaint the public with the true background of the Finaly case. The facts had been systematically and tendentiously twisted, and some of them omitted in the rightist and Catholic press. Even today a section of French public opinion is still badly informed, and continues to be misled about the Finaly case by the propaganda working to convert it into a solely religious issue—this in complete disregard of the moral questions involved and the natural rights of the family.

Again, Antoinette Brun refused to hand over the children. Instead, she once more started proceedings to annul the legitimate family council. Though her arguments were entirely specious, the local court complied by decreeing another annulment on November 15, 1951, on the pretext that the council assembled by Mr. Keller had not included the late Mme. Finaly's brother, Otto Schwartz, who was living in Gmuend, Austria, after his return from exile in Shanghai. But Mr. Schwartz had already given his consent to the appointment of Mrs. Rosner as guardian.

The local court was now overruled by the Court of Appeals on June 11, 1952, and Mrs. Rosner was confirmed as guardian. On this occasion the boys appeared in court, but on July 15, 1952, when the bailiff went to the Brun home to take them, they and Mlle. Brun had disappeared. Mr. Keller filed a complaint, and the magistrate summoned Mlle. Brun. She appeared but refused categorically to hand over the boys, then left without being disturbed. Where were the children? No one knew. Mlle. Brun kept her silence, and the court did nothing.

On August 12, 1952, the boys' uncle, Otto Schwartz, was visited in Gmuend by a Franciscan father from Vienna, Eugen Berthold, who brought him a letter from Mlle. Brun dated August 8. On the pretext of needing an authorization to enter the children in a state school, Mlle. Brun asked Mr. Schwartz to "designate her officially as guardian." Also, she proposed a meeting with Mr. Schwartz so that he would have a chance to see his nephews.

One detail, however, had escaped Mlle. Brun. Scattered though it was, the Finaly-Schwartz family had preserved firm ties. Otto Schwartz was not unaware of the troubles his sisters-in-law were having in their efforts to get hold of their nephews. He saw the trap and refused to sign.

On September 12 Father Berthold himself wrote to Mr. Schwartz on behalf of Mlle. Brun. She was going to take Robert and Gerald to the Franciscan monastery in Strasbourg, and she offered to pay for a ticket from Vienna to Strasbourg for Mr. Schwartz, who was poor. Mr. Schwartz wanted to see his nephews, and to get a clear view of the situation, so he went to Grenoble and from there to Strasbourg, where Mlle. Brun had made a rendezvous for October 3. He called at the Franciscan monastery. Antoinette was there, but not the children. The tenor of his conversation with the woman took him so much aback that Mr. Schwartz went to a bailiff and drew up an affidavit, part of which read: "Having indicated in the first place, in a letter to Mlle. Brun, that I would not come unless I could see my two nephews, Robert and Gerald Finaly, and having twice gone in vain to the monastery of the Franciscan Fathers in Strasbourg, where I had been asked to come, I found Mlle. Brun there without the children but in the company of two gentlemen unknown to me. Our conversation was interpreted by a father of the Franciscan order. Mlle. Brun declared that she had lost a trial and that they wanted to rob her of the children. Then she proposed to take me in an auto, with herself and the two gentlemen, to Grenoble. When, after a long discussion, I accepted her proposal, she suddenly declared that the children were in a college at Chambéry, although she had at first pretended that they were in a convent at Grenoble. In addition, she declared that she would not agree to my going there. In the course of the conversation Mlle. Brun offered me money and asked me to declare that I had visited her at Christmas or Easter, and that I had at that

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time reached a decision on the subject of the children. I refused. I was very disappointed, after a thirty-hour train trip, to meet Mlle. Brun and two gentlemen whom I did not know, but not my nephews. She also mentioned a bank account in Switzerland in the name of my brother-in-law, F. Finaly; she suggested that if I came to an agreement with her, she would send me the papers and I would be able to take it over.

"Having been deeply disappointed after having made the acquaintance of Mlle. Brun, and having been displeased by her behavior towards me, I have come to the firm conclusion that Mr. Keller of Grenoble should proceed as rapidly as possible in the execution of the judgment, and that the children should be taken to their guardian, Mrs. Rosner, in Gederah [Israel]."

As we see, a religious order had now entered the picture. After the kidnapping of the children, the Franciscans protested their good faith, and since Mlle. Brun made a habit of lying by omission, it is quite possible that the fathers had been left in complete ignorance of the real situation.

On November 18, 1952, Mlle. Brun was brought up before a criminal court. She claimed that until 1950 the children's relatives had given no sign of life. The court's decision was set for December 2, and on November 28 the attorneys for the family submitted a voluminous supplementary *dossier*, every detail of which was irrefutable. On that very same day, however—four days before the date set for the decision—the court handed down a verdict, without examining the *dossier*, in which it censured the Court of Appeals for confirming Mrs. Rosner as guardian and accepted the allegations of Mlle. Brun: "noted . . . the accused affirms that the Finaly family did not claim the minors after the liberation of the territory." The decision also questioned the validity of Mr. Keller's authority, and mentioned as a weighty factor the baptism of the children. However, because she had not produced the children, Mlle. Brun still fell under article 357 of the Penal Code and was liable to a year in prison. Yet the court ruled that she was not guilty because the care of the children had not been *expressly* entrusted to Mrs. Rosner! This time a question of mere syntax and form saved Mlle. Brun.

On January 8, 1953, Maitre Maurice Garçon pleaded for the Finaly family before the Court of Appeals in Grenoble, and went into the question of the precise nature of the exclusive and jealous maternal passion Mlle. Brun was protesting. Actually, while Robert and Gerald were at the municipal nursery, from 1944 to 1946, they were taken care of by Mlle. Brun's old maidservant. In its order issued on June 11, 1952, the Grenoble court had demanded that the children be produced; when this was not done, it was discovered that they had left the Grenoble municipal nursery in 1946 for a religious boarding school, and then for a religious day school in Voiron (Isère). While there, they had boarded with a lady in town under the names of Robert and Gerald Brun. In 1949 they had left the school of Saint Joseph of Voiron for a religious *pension* in Lugano, Switzerland, where they remained for a year. From September to December of 1950 they had been with the Dominicans of Coublecie (Isère) under the names of Louis and Marc Quadri. During the school year 1951-52 they were again at Saint Joseph of Voiron under the names of Louis and Marc Brun.

After their kidnapping, evidence was produced showing that in September 1952 they had been placed with the Ancelles (the lay branch of the order of Notre Dame de Sion) in Paris, but that at the beginning of October 1952, at the time when Antoinette Brun was summoning their uncle Otto Schwartz to Strasbourg and telling him that they were at Chambéry, they were in a school of the order of Notre Dame de Sion in Marseille under the name of Quadri. In January 1953 they were placed in another school of Notre Dame de Sion in Marseille under the names of Martella and Olivieri.

When they had appeared in the Court of Appeals in June 1952, the boys politely told the court, as if it were the most natural thing on earth, that they usually saw Mlle. Brun only once a year. The presiding judge was so startled that he repeated the question, and got the same answer from the children. Obviously, Mlle. Brun's maternal passion was not excessive. At this time, in 1952, the Finaly case was still nothing but the Brun case. Partly out of religious fanaticism, partly out of a sheer taste for squabbling and intrigue, Mlle. Brun was obstructing justice.

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People were talking about her, and she liked it. Her letters reveal her penchant for florid histrionics. In one, she assumes that everybody knows about her warm heart. In another, she complains of being misunderstood, persecuted. She writes "The Jews are ungrateful," and again, "I am Catholic and I have rescued large numbers of Jews and I have received nothing but hate in return."

On January 29, 1953, the Court of Appeals reversed the criminal court's decisions, confirming the rights of Mrs. Rosner and issuing a final order against Antoinette Brun.

She had lost. The only resort which remained to her was an appeal to the Court of Cassation, the highest court of appeal in France, but before she could go there she would have to give up the children.

As was later discovered, at midnight, January 29, Abbé Mollard, pastor of the Marseille church of Saint Michel, appeared in the St. Charles railroad station in Marseille and handed Robert and Gerald Finaly over to a certain Mme. Bleuze. She was the sister of Mother Antonine, Superior of Notre Dame de Sion in Grenoble. At three in the afternoon of January 30, Mme. Bleuze and the children arrived in Bayonne, in the foothills of the Pyrenees, only thirty miles from Spain. She went to the boarding school of Saint Louis de Gonzague, saw its Superior, Father Silhouette, and requested him to accept as students François and Antoine Martela—otherwise Robert and Gerald Finaly.

But Mme. Bleuze talked too much, never doubting the "discretion" of Father Silhouette. In the course of the conversation she told of how bored the boys had been on their journey from Grenoble. Father Silhouette had a lively intelligence; he had read in the newspapers of the decision of the Court of Appeals, and knew about the Finaly children. He became suspicious: no, he would not accept the children. Mme. Bleuze bit her tongue, a little late. But she showed him the boys' school identity cards—forged ones in the name of Martela that she had received from Mother Antonine—and Father Silhouette yielded. Mme. Bleuze took the train for Grenoble, where she arrived the following day and reported to Mother Antonine.

After Mme. Bleuze had left, Father Silhouette reflected. The whole business was suspicious. He informed the Bayonne district attorney, who alerted the district attorney of Grenoble. The latter asked Bayonne to make sure of the identity of the children, and to hand them over to the Director of Population, a functionary of the Ministry of Public Health. But the Bayonne prosecutor contented himself with an order to Father Silhouette to keep the children under his supervision.

On February 1 Mother Antonine, worried by her sister's clumsiness, left Grenoble for Biarritz. There she went to the Mother Superior of Notre Dame de Sion of Biarritz, who told her of Father Silhouette's action. Mother Antonine went immediately to the palace of Bishop Terrier of Bayonne, who saw her at nine in the evening. She told him that Mlle. Brun had asked her help in placing the children in a religious school out of reach of "court quarrels."

Bishop Terrier had one of his canons telephone Guy Petit, mayor of Bayonne (who a few days later became Minister of Commerce in René Mayer's cabinet). Mr. Petit was at a meeting of the Municipal Council and could not come to the phone. A half hour later he called the Bishop's palace and told Canon Narbaitz that he would get in touch with the district attorney of Bayonne, and when he went to Paris the following day, would ask the Keeper of the Seals for "additional information."

On February 3 Mr. Keller, armed with the proper papers, arrived at eight in the morning at the Saint Louis de Gonzague school to take the children. But, again, they had disappeared. Accompanied by the district attorney, he went to the Bishop, who declared he knew nothing at all. About what happened to the boys during the next few days, little is likely ever to be learned. (When Mother Antonine, Antoinette Brun, and the Basque priests were arrested, later, they refused to answer many questions, and admitted only what was common knowledge.)

The police searched for the children in vain. Subsequent investigation disclosed, at a time when the boys were already out of reach of French authority, that on February 12 a professor at the Catholic seminary in Bayonne, Abbé Laxague, had entrusted

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them to an Abbé Aristiart, who had carried them off to St. Jean de Luz. A businessman in that city, Mr. Fagalde, took them by auto to Guétary, and there handed them over to another Basque businessman, Mr. Etchesaharetta, who took them during the night to the pastor of Biriatou, Abbé Ibarburu. On February 13, Abbé Ibarburu, with a ferryman named Susterreguy, took Robert and Gerald to the Spanish border, which was not far from Biriatou. The weather was bad. Abbé Ibarburu went back to his parish, while Susterreguy crossed the frontier with the boys, making them do a five-hour forced march through deep snow. This would have been a grueling ordeal for an adult, let alone for two small children raised in convents, and, on top of that, certainly weakened by the wandering existence they had been made to lead for two weeks.

Once over the border, they were on the way to Vera in Spain, but Abbé Ibarburu followed them in Etchesaharetta's car, caught up with them, and brought them to St. Sebastian, where he asked the organist of the church of St. Ignatius, Abbé Ahlister, to put them up. When the latter refused, Abbé Ibarburu went to the Abbey of Lascarro. From then on all trace of the children vanishes.

The law had been violated. Arrests began. Mother Antonine cursed the police who came for her, in language not usually associated with a Reverend Mother. The Basque priests gave themselves up without a word. But Antoinette Brun's arrest caused a commotion in print. Pierre Scize, writing in *Figaro,* gave "the good lady of Grenoble" a place in the lives of the Saints. For some weeks the French press was divided into two camps, her partisans and her adversaries.

THE most fantastic stories were put in circulation. Writers lost themselves in hypotheses as to the place where the children were hidden but, with rare exception, nobody except the boys' relatives really worried about their physical fate. It took almost two months to bring home to the public the fact that these relatives had been claiming the children since 1945. On February 6, 1953, Gérard Bauer of the Académie Goncourt wrote in *Figaro* under the pen name "Guermantes": "At least there is nothing base in this case; the affair is one of a conflict between the passion of faith and the rights of the family and the heart."

These "rights of the heart," about which a great deal was heard in the days following the kidnapping, were immediately taken for a proven fact by the Catholic press and used as an argument in the Brun woman's favor. On March 30 a provincial newspaper, *Le Lorrain,* reporting a judgment of a court in Nice giving a foster mother the guardianship of a boy born of an unknown father and abandoned at birth by his mother, did not hesitate to write that the same issue was involved in the Finaly case, and that the Nice judgment "was a model for the one which the Court of Cassation should give in the Finaly *affaire.*"

But very soon the debate left these "rights of the heart" to dwell on "the fanatical passion of faith." On February 11, 1953, François Mauriac, the Catholic novelist and editorial writer of *Figaro,* entered the arena. He tossed forth a formula, "the children's point of view," and wrote: "The faith of the two children is involved. I can testify that at their age my religious life became conscious and took on a certain tone and coloration which it has never since lost; that it became fixed, less perhaps in a dogmatic and moral sense, than in a personal relation established with someone invisible yet present. . . . Which of their two allegiances will win out in these children's hearts? The allegiance to their fathers, to the ashes of martyrs, or the allegiance to that Son of David who was crucified for them, too, who has marked them with his sign, and who, since their baptism, knows them by their first names? Perhaps they themselves will know how to effect a synthesis between these two allegiances. Is not Christianity, for a baptized Jew, the fulfillment of the word given to Abraham our father?"

The novelist of Thérèse Desqueyroux, of the delights of sin and of efficacious grace, now set the tone. Baptism supplanted Antoinette Brun in the leading role. From then on it was not a mother, or a pretended foster mother who claimed the children, but a church. Mauriac, as a Christian "of the world," returned to the notion of the sovereign Church's right to decide. On February 10, only a week after the kidnapping, the Reverend Father Gabel, in *Le Croix,* the official organ of the French Church, distin-

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guished between the juridical and moral aspects of the Finaly case: "Juridically, it can be said, a decision of the courts was disregarded and the police were deceived. In every society, respect for law and justice is a condition of peace and order. Morally, it is much more complex—two orphan children who have been baptized, have known affection, have been educated, are uprooted, were to be snatched away from her whom they called 'mama' and entrusted to an aunt whom they did not know, transplanted to Israel against the will of their lost father, and thrown into a society whose language they did not know."

It will be noted that after a formal salute to "the rights of the heart," Father Gabel introduces a new idea—that of the children's nationality. Dr. Finaly had in fact got French naturalization for his elder son, Robert, and would have done the same for Gerald if the racial laws in force by that time had not prevented it. It is certain that Dr. Finaly considered France his adopted country, and that the children, raised in France and speaking French, could be regarded as French. Now Israel was brought into the case, as it was to be increasingly. But if Mrs. Fischel had been able to get the children in 1945, there would have been no question of Israel, since the Fischels had become subjects of New Zealand. It was only by chance that Mrs. Rosner, living in Israel, became their legal guardian. And the laws of Israel and France, both, allow children to postpone their choice of nationality until they have grown up. Until then Robert and Gerald would have remained French in the eyes of French law.

Father Gabel wrote further: "The Church is a perfect society that has authority over those men who have become its members by baptism." He emphasized that there were nevertheless certain cases in which a complex of problems "suggests that the Church should not press the exercise of that right." And in conclusion: "These children are now eleven and twelve years old. One must take account above all of what they are; one must take account also of the love which has saved them at the risk of liberty and of life."

What did this mean but that the authority of the Church over anyone baptized into it having been proclaimed, it was still necessary for ecclesiastical authority to take protection behind the appeal to such secondary considerations as "rights of the heart," nationality, and culture? A week after the kidnapping, the ecclesiastics involved were anxious to keep the gates neither open—"the children are baptized, hence ours"—nor closed: the turn of events might bring about their forced return at any moment. On the one hand, the official press of French Catholicism does not disavow a Catholic, Antoinette Brun, or the priests and nuns who caused the children's disappearance. But neither does it openly take the side of these disturbers of public order who have broken the laws of the Republic.

Each succeeding day through February and March the discussion of the Finaly affair took on an increasingly theological turn. But the approach was often oblique, hiding behind sociological, juridical, or psychological considerations, if only in order to appear more amiable. The question of baptism, and of the irrevocable character in general of the Catholic sacraments, dominated everything. Even the columns of big, respectable nonconfessional newspapers like *Le Monde* were suddenly drenched with religiosity; writing in *Le Monde* February 25, the Reverend Father Riquet invoked Canon 1351 according to which "no person may be forced to embrace the Catholic faith," and was disputed by a certain Abbé Deroo, who answered, March 10: "In similar circumstances, the Church respects the rights of the family, but it cannot avoid its own duties; baptism makes the child a Christian, and the child comes under the jurisdiction of the Church. The latter has the duty of assuring its members the riches and blessings of the life eternal which are superior in dignity and worth to the bare demands of the natural order."

Meanwhile negotiations for a compromise solution were being set in motion. It is clear that they were bound to fail, although promoted by persons of good will. At the date of writing nothing has been accomplished. The negotiations have a semi-secret character, and, although mentioned in the press, are categorically denied by the persons involved.

A week after the disappearance of the

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boys the attorney for the relatives, Maitre Garçon, received certain proposals from the other side through a magistrate in close touch with, and speaking for, the Bishop of Lyons. At the same time Grand Rabbi Kaplan received a sort of plan for the restitution of the children from a well-known Jesuit who had behaved with especial heroism under the German occupation and saved many Jewish children from the Gestapo. This Jesuit father declared that he was ready to go to the Basque country and thought that, backed by the authority of Cardinal Gerlier, he would be able to find the children and restore them to their family. It seemed that there was a chance for agreement, and that a desire for a settlement existed on the part of certain members of the French clergy, particularly among the bishops. Had not Bishop Gaillot of Grenoble issued an appeal that anybody with information about the whereabouts of the boys should give it to the proper authorities immediately?

All these proposals on the part of the clergy contained controversial points, but an agreement should not have been hard to reach nevertheless. The children were to remain in France at least until the decision of the Court of Cassation, which would definitively determine Mrs. Rosner's rights; they were to receive a French education; and they were to make their own choice of religion. Mr. Keller, spokesman for the family, made a statement that was headlined in the newspapers: "The children shall go to Mass if they want to."

But the days passed and the Jesuit father, returned from Spain, was unable to restore the children because he had not found them. Certain newspapers, while publishing urgent appeals in the name of "Judeo-Christian friendship" for a compromise, circulated strange rumors: the Spanish Church, with its historical inability to compromise, was blocking the search; the children had left Spain for Austria, Brazil, Chile. *Figaro* even went so far as to say that nothing could be done without the benevolent cooperation of the Spanish police, and that General Franco was asking in exchange for the children the surrender to him of a score of Spanish Republicans in asylum in France. Only a *quid pro quo* of this kind, *Figaro* claimed, would make it possible really to look for the Finaly children in Spain.

Meanwhile, a campaign for the release of the jailed kidnappers and their accomplices was under way. Antoinette Brun was described as lying sick on a damp and lumpy straw mattress in her prison cell, and the Basque priests as playing pelota in the courtyard of their jail. A committee for the defense of "Basque liberties" put up a poster signed by Jean Ybarnegaray, notorious for his collaboration with the Germans during the war, that read: "Are we going to let the Jews and their bought press insult and persecute with their hatred the priests and nuns who, in the hour when they were being hunted down, saved them from the Gestapo at the risk of their own lives?" At the same time special reporters from the great evening papers were camping on the Spanish frontier. Every day announcements came that the children were to be returned on the following day. The negotiations continued. The French cabinet deliberated. In the name of the independent and peasant ministers in the cabinet, Messieurs Roger Duchet, Camille Laurens, Guy Petit, and Paul Ribeyre insisted on the urgency of freeing the Basque priests, whose imprisonment, according to them, was stirring up certain "regionalist disturbances." A weekly repeated Premier Mayer's phrase: "My name does not permit me to keep priests in prison." Until March 11, when the full facts were publicly stated by Maitre Garçon, the newspapers were filled with rumors that the release of the secular and regular clergy arrested at Bayonne and Grenoble had become an indispensable condition for the success of the negotiations. At last the priests, the nuns, and Mlle. Brun were freed. March did not bring the children. Nor did April.

TODAY the point of the negotiations initiated by the clergy seems clear. By approaching Jewish community leaders, the Catholic representatives aimed to shift to a religious plane a case that came exclusively under the criminal law of the Republic, and should not have required the intervention of either Jew or Catholic *as* Jew or Catholic. The Church wanted discussions with Jews as *the Jews* in order to set up a *religious* adversary against whom it could be proved that it, the Church, had acquired the souls of the children, and *therefore* had authority over their baptized bodies. If the issues in the Finaly *affaire* could be staked out along such lines, questions of

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law and legality could be disregarded. The rights of the family, which the Catholics never cease proclaiming when it suits their purposes (in the name of which, for instance, they got the Baranger Law passed, giving state subsidies to religious schools in a country where the tradition of lay schools is so old as to be an essential feature of the Republican order)—these rights of the family, being subject to legal, not theological, determination, were never even mentioned in the hubbub raised in asserting the supreme validity of the sacraments.

On March 2 a university professor, Paul Benichou, sent *Le Monde* an open letter in which he clearly set forth the dimensions of the problem: "What can be the meaning of this doctrinal complaisance, of which we see so many signs, in the presence of a flagrant attack on the laws? Of these allusions to the rights of the Church over baptized children, these higher considerations that are set up as against the legal code, these mysteries of faith and conscience that are bound up with the violation of the law, this pretense at reaching a compromise between the law and something else whose name is not mentioned? Is it not time for us to recall that the law is the sole authority in France, that no church has legal powers, that no sacraments of any religion have any civil validity? This has been the case for over a hundred and fifty years. One would think that there could no longer be any question about it. The Finaly case proves that the contrary is true, and this is why it is a serious affair."

The children have disappeared. The protests of organizations of all sorts, from the League of the Rights of Man to the Alliance Israélite, can multiply. But by now it is apparent that nothing less than a Papal command can unbind tongues and open the doors of convents in Spain. No such order has come. The Court of Cassation will soon give its verdict for or against Mrs. Rosner. But will that verdict be able to do anything that the verdict of the Court of Appeals could not? Today as yesterday, all roads lead to Rome. And Rome is silent.

But in the Vatican time is measured in terms of eternity. France, oldest daughter of the Church, has become a land of little faith. Few Frenchmen live without baptism and die without extreme unction; but for most of them the sacraments are just custom and mundane convention. It is only for the moment that theology has become a favorite newspaper subject, morning and evening, in France. Tomorrow the latest news from the Kremlin, the floods, or the horse races will have consigned it back to the seminaries. But, if the Finaly children are not returned, every Frenchman will know in the future that there is a difference between his act of baptism and his certificate of vaccination. They will also know that once a child is baptized, sole authority over it lies in the hands of the Church.

But, in 1953, is this the last word?

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THE PLIGHT OF OUR CULTURE

Industrialism and Class Mobility

CLEMENT GREENBERG

T. S. ELIOT'S most recent book on a non-literary subject, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture,* proceeds largely on the assumption, familiar by now, that our culture is in decline. The book, when it appeared in 1949, received an amount of attention proportionate to its author's fame, but the quality of that attention did not match the importance of the problems raised. The assumption as to cultural decline was neither questioned nor explicitly rejected. Most of the regular reviewers scolded *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* for its reactionary tendencies and left it at that, whereas the literary magazines, with even greater obtuseness, treated it as one more item to be placed in the temple of Eliot's reputation. (William Barrett and Robert Gorham Davis, in *Kenyon Review* and *Partisan Review,* respectively, formed exceptions, as did also the contributors to a symposium in *Scrutiny* in England.)

True, the assertion that our culture was deteriorating was made without being argued, just as Eliot tended throughout to pontificate rather than consider evidence and draw conclusions from it, though professing in all earnestness to be writing as a responsible sociologist. And just as, too often in general, partial glimpses of partial truths were offered as complete answers, truisms as fresh contributions. Nevertheless, Eliot did pose a problem of enormous importance, state cogently some of the limits within which it would have to be solved, and remind us of our failure, so far, to have thought about it seriously enough.

In any case, his book would be important as an influence and a symptom. We cannot forget who Eliot is: one of the very greatest of all literary critics, a remarkable poet, and a writer whose prestige at the moment is probably larger than that enjoyed by any other English-speaking literary man during his own lifetime. Also, he has been a great reformer of sensibility, outside as well as inside literature, with consequences felt in areas of intellectual life seemingly remote from *belles-lettres* or art. Sensibility may not be identical with intelligence, but prepossessions of feeling can become premises of thought, and limitations of thought, limitations of emotion and experience.

Eliot has done as much as anyone in our time to expose the superficialities that have accompanied the popularization of the ideas of the Enlightenment, of Utilitarianism, and "scientism"—but by criticizing a kind of sensibility, not systems of ideas. Nor does his quarrel seem in the beginning to have been with the ideas of liberalism as such, or with any set of ideas, but with deadness of sensibility wherever he found it, on the right and left, in church and out; and if he found it more often on the left, it was not so much because he wanted, at first, to find it there. Only later, when he began to deal

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ONE of the "big" issues today is the direction in which machine-age culture is headed—the heights or the depths? CLEMENT GREENBERG, in this two-part article, which takes off from an analysis of T. S. Eliot's *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture,* tries to show that culture is moving today on a middle plane between the two, but argues that culture suffers under such a compromise, and must always direct itself towards the highest level. The problem, as he sees it, and which he thinks Eliot neglects, is to adapt our humanist tradition to the new industrial environment and, in doing so, reshape both. Mr. Greenberg is an associate editor of COMMENTARY and an art critic. His book on Joan Miró, the Catalan painter, appeared in 1948, and another book by him, on Matisse, will be published this coming autumn by Harry N. Abrams, Inc.

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publicly with non-literary matters, did he fix on liberalism as the main enemy, and adopt a consciously "anti-modern" religious and political position. But it was then, too, that his own sensibility showed the first symptoms of the same ailment he had diagnosed. His cure turned out to be a variant of that malady, and he, too, became an ideologue, remaining fixed, with no further understanding, in his original disgust with "modernism." And as he has gone on flogging the same tired horse—omitting in his criticism of the Enlightenment to distinguish between the root ideas and their vulgarization—he has become less and less able to distinguish between insight and banality in the notions he himself advances.

Nowhere in Eliot's later writings do we find so much evidence of this inability as in *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*. Its disconcerting mixture of sense and superficiality, penetration and obtuseness, makes it a treacherous springboard for further discussion, and I can understand why most reviewers should have drawn back from the plunge. For this very reason, however, and for others, it may be worth going a little further into the deficiencies of the *Notes* before considering independently some of the issues that it raises.

ELIOT has obeyed that rule established in the 18th century according to which the eminent man of letters begins to feel in middle age that literature is not enough, and aspires to some larger power over public opinion. But like Thomas Mann, he has made the big mistake of offering himself as a head as well as conscience. Victor Hugo knew better; so, really, did Matthew Arnold, and even Carlyle: they lectured and admonished, confident of their instinct for moral issues, but, for all their *obiter dicta*, seldom tried to theorize consistently. Besides, literary men have a tendency to confuse aesthetic with social values (see, for example, Arnold on America). This, I think, has been particularly the case with Eliot. And he is also prone to adopt attitudes that, however honestly meant, are not honestly come by (whence sometimes a note of involuntary parody enters—as if seriousness, especially that with which he wishes to take himself, were a strain requiring comic relief).

Whether or not he got his first political notions from the late Charles Maurras, Eliot has been chronically susceptible (perhaps because early impressed by the high cultural level of French reaction) to the kind of thing Maurras expressed most consistently: that type of reaction, trimmed out with Catholicism, "tradition," "classicism," "hierarchism," "authority," ultra-nationalism, and anti-Semitism, which an eminent section of French literary, if not political, opinion has professed ever since de Maistre and de Bonald, in the first half of the 19th century, laid down a systematic basis for rejecting the French Revolution. The main trouble with this position is less that it is reactionary than that it is irrelevant, and their own half-suppressed realization of this has the effect of driving its adherents to but further extremes of irrelevance—as we saw when Maurras collaborated with the Germans under the Occupation (for which he sat in jail for six years). Eliot, repeating a number of the same ideas to an English-speaking public in books like *After Strange Gods* and *The Idea of a Christian Society*, has been, if anything, more irrelevant, and some of his published remarks on politics, made over the last two decades, belong together with many leftist expressions of the period in an anthology of political nonsense. That, as I have heard, he voted Labor in 1945 would only bear out the charge.

Like most inveterate aesthetes, Eliot appears to lack a sense of the urgent reality of politics as a matter of weal and woe, and to regard correct opinion as an end in itself. Nor does he seem to appreciate the multiplicity and variability of the factors that determine social reality. This is as much a deficiency of sensibility as of intelligence, and the fact that Eliot shows a real awareness of historical movement inside literature does not gainsay this, but only demonstrates, once again, how much better his mind functions—and how much more he respects his subject

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—where aesthetic ends are the decisive ones.

But in *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* we will also find things chargeable to what has to be called mindlessness, not just want of sensibility. It is startling to come across sentences like ". . . it may be argued that complete equality means universal irresponsibility. . . ." Or: "A democracy in which everybody had an equal responsibility in everything would be oppressive for the conscientious and licentious for the rest." Such statements are neither correct nor incorrect, but simply useless. The writer settles a very large and complicated question at a stroke by repeating an old saw sententiously, thus sparing himself further thought—which is exactly the function of cant. And when he apologizes, with that elephantine humor which can astound us again and again in Eliot, for a paragraph, otherwise full of good sense, that ends with the words "destroying our ancient edifices to make ready the ground upon which barbarian nomads of the future will encamp in their mechanized caravans," by adding that this was but an "incidental flourish to relieve the feelings of the writer and perhaps a few of his more sympathetic readers," we are far from sure that he himself realizes what a threadbare piece of journalism he has just repeated. Eliot can begin another paragraph with the sentence: "The colonization problem arises from migration." And refer to "vast impersonal forces." And "the oriental cast of the Russian mind." American movies are called "that influential and inflammable article the celluloid film." Something even worse than mindlessness is involved in: "I do not approve of the extermination of the enemy; the policy of exterminating or, as is barbarously said, liquidating enemies, is one of the most alarming developments of modern war and peace, from the point of view of those who desire the survival of culture. One needs the enemy." (Who, in modern times, has needed what exterminated enemy?) Never was a humane sentiment expressed with such barbaric and fatuous humor. At this point one becomes alarmed for the author's soul, not his mind. And, after all, Eliot is, or was, a great writer.

One can see why this present book of his is so difficult to deal with. Yet this does not make the issues he deals with any the less momentous; nor does this tendency to clown of which I have given examples prevent him from saying much that is arresting and true —if not exactly original.*

I

ELIOT writes in his introductory chapter: "The most important question that we can ask, is whether there is any permanent standard, by which we can compare one civilization with another, and by which we can make some guess at the improvement or decline of our own. We have to admit, in comparing one civilization with another and in comparing the different stages of our own, that no one society and no one age of it realizes all the values of civilization. Not all of these values may be compatible with each other; what is at least certain is that in realizing some we lose the appreciation of others. Nevertheless, we can distinguish between higher and lower cultures; we can distinguish between advance and retrogression. We can assert with some confidence that our own period is one of decline; that the standards of culture are lower than they were fifty years ago; and that the evidences of this decline are visible in every department of human activity." Nowhere does Eliot even hint at the "permanent standard" of comparison that enables him to make this assertion with "some confidence"; he appears to assume, simply, that the reader's own experience will confirm it, and leaves the question of the "permanent standard" itself—theoretically, a far more important one—wide open. If he had tried to close it, perhaps his book would have done more to stimulate a fruitful discussion.

At the same time his definition of culture is not (as the title of his book might indi-

* To be wholly fair to Eliot, a "note" on culture that he published in *Partisan Review* in 1944 should be taken into account. No part of this "note" has been retained in original form in the present book, although it says more in fewer, apter, and carefuller words than does any chapter in the latter.

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cate) worked "towards" but merely handed down. Culture, in Eliot's view, is, as Marxists would say, entirely "superstructural"; it excludes political, social, religious, and economic institutions, which come, presumably, under the broader term of *civilization*. Culture "includes all the characteristic activities and interests of a people: Derby Day, Henley Regatta . . . the pin table, the dart board, Wensleydale cheese, boiled cabbage cut into sections . . . 19th century Gothic churches and the music of Elgar." There is the individual's culture, which depends on that of his class and group, which derive in turn from the culture of the "whole society." Obviously, much has to be investigated and weighed before one can assert with *any* confidence that every present aspect of culture, even under this definition—much less "every department of human activity"—bears evidence of a decline of cultural standards. Little in Eliot's book testifies to such an investigation.

A reasonable question is whether enough evidence of cultural improvement might not be discovered in each "department of human activity" to balance the evidence of decline. I would agree with Eliot that decline predominates in most of the arts, in standards of taste, in some departments of learning, and many aspects of manners, but would hesitate to say this of *all* the arts, *all* areas of taste, *all* departments of learning, or manners on *all* social levels. Do the *majority* of people in England and America eat more poorly prepared food than fifty years ago? Have dress and décor declined since then? Has—particularly—architecture? The majority of people in the industrial countries of the West are certainly gentler in their relations with one another than they used to be, whatever the upper classes have lost in formal grace. The poor remain the most numerous, and fifty years ago they were not only poorer, but, according to the mass of evidence, much more brutal and brutish. Culture has lost much on its higher levels, but may there not have been some compensation on those where the multitude find their "characteristic activities and interests"?

Such questions are not easy to answer, least of all with "confidence." The problem is far more complicated than Eliot actually does acknowledge, however much he seems to do so. And in its complication may lie reasons for hope as well as despair. The reasons for the latter—the war, the exterminations, the oppression, the present tawdriness of our machine-made environment with its commercial culture and its leveling, etc.—are obvious, all too obvious. By seizing upon the obvious so confidently, Eliot, and others like him, collaborate with journalists in diverting attention from causes to effects, though they may think they are doing the opposite. The general readiness to cry woe, the crisis-mongering, may itself be the symptom of a decline of culture.

GRANTED, nevertheless, that our culture is in decline on its highest levels: what can be done about it? The weight of Eliot's short book is placed on a description of three conditions he deems more or less indispensable to a recovery. He does not propose that we set about directly to establish or restore these, but hopes rather to clarify the problem by dissipating false hopes: we are to infer that certain social and political conditions now present will largely frustrate any *ad hoc* measures to remedy the plight of culture, and that these conditions must be changed first.

The first desirable condition is an "organic (not merely planned, but growing) structure, such as will foster the hereditary transmission of culture within a culture; and this requires the persistence of social classes. The second is the necessity that a culture should be analyzable, geographically, into local cultures: this raises the problem of 'regionalism.' The third is the balance of unity and diversity in religion—that is, universality of doctrine with particularity of cult and devotion." But: "The reader must keep in mind that I am not pretending to account for all the necessary conditions for a flourishing culture; I discuss three which have especially struck my attention . . . so far as my observation goes, you are unlikely to have a high

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civilization where these conditions are absent."*

Yet almost nothing is presented of the content of the "observation" that has led to this important conclusion; we can only surmise that Periclean Athens, the medieval West, Elizabethan England, Renaissance North Italy, 17th-century France, and so forth, are meant—the accepted golden ages of art and literature. It is implied that successful *novelty* in the social and political structures which support culture is by and large impossible: as culture developed in the past, so must it in the future.

We can quibble over the necessity or importance, even in the past, of the second and third conditions that Eliot lays down, but the indispensability, so far in history, of class differences to a high urban culture cannot be denied, since there is no record of any such culture without them. The big question is whether class divisions—or, to be exact, the traditional alignment of small upper class over against large lower class—will continue to be as necessary to high culture as in the past. Eliot's answer in the affirmative provoked most of the hostile comment his book received (in their heat the reviewers overlooked his introductory statement that class divisions may not be essential to the achievement of other, perhaps higher, values than culture; though later on, it is true—on page 47—he does imply that a "graded" society is the best form of society in general).

Marx pointed out that productivity in even the most materially advanced societies of the past was always so low that the majority had to work full time to provide, in addition to their own necessities, the material surplus to support the leisure and ease of the relatively tiny minority that maintained high culture wherever it appeared. Marx's prognosis of a socialist future was founded on the assumption that science and industrial technology would eventually make it possible for society to produce material goods in such plenty as to render social differences unnecessary and put the dignified leisure required for the pursuit of high culture within reach of everyone. Whether this expectation is utopian or not, Marx did at least sense the big difference that industrialism would make as far as the *structure* of society was concerned. Eliot's failure to give more than a passing glance to industrialism, on the implied assumption that it contains little but harm for culture, prevents his discussion of modern culture from advancing, in effect, beyond the point at which Spengler left it.

Like Spengler, Eliot gives one to infer that industrialism is but another of the time-bound phenomena that, along with skeptical rationalism and hugeness of cities, accompany the decline of any high civilization. But to judge from the past again, humanity, barring some unprecedented catastrophe, will no more forget industrial technology than it has, amid the rise and fall of civilizations, forgotten the use of metal tools, the wheel, domestic plants, or domestic animals. Technological progress has been irreversible by and large; that is, there has been a cumulative gain in our control of the material environment. As a rule, once a people learned to use bronze it never went back to stone, and once it learned to handle iron it never went back to bronze. There have been temporary retreats, especially in quality of workmanship, but the evidence shows that these have almost always been made good. (Franz Borkenau, in "Will Technology Destroy Civilization?" in *Commentary* of January 1951, quotes Alfred Weber, the German historian, to this effect.) That industrialism will remain with us in one form or another would seem to be the largest single circumstance to be taken into account in any discussion of the future prospects of our culture.

* Eliot's discussion (pp. 27 to 32) of the relations between religion and culture, and more particularly, art, is, in my opinion, the most original part of his book. He is as cavalier here with the rules of discourse and evidence as elsewhere (of what use is it to say that culture is impossible without religion when we know of no society—not even the USSR—that has existed without religion?) but at least he seems to have experienced a good deal of what he talks about. And because he reveals more frankly, if unintentionally, the profound aestheticism that sways him in his religious convictions no less than in his political and social ones, he rings truer.

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RADICAL changes in technology have in the past always transformed the inner, or cultural, as well as the outer, or social, structure of society. We have reason to expect that industrialism—to which, really, we are still new—will, in the long run, effect more radical and comprehensive changes in the fundamental *scheme* of culture and civilization (as Franz Borkenau pointed out in his *Commentary* article of January 1951) than anything that has happened since the Neolithic revolution which some eight or nine thousand years ago replaced the hunting and gathering economy of the Paleolithic Age with an agricultural and herding one. Hence many premises based on observation of the relatively recent past must be discarded, and the prospects of culture, now as well as in the hypothetical future, viewed within a new perspective—not altogether new, of course, but new enough to demand a re-examination of the assumptions that ideologues of "tradition," like Eliot, proceed on.

At best one can reason from past experience only under the most general terms. The "Iron Age" civilizations of the past three millennia form in their aggregate only one part of the history of civilization as such, and at this point in time it is as hazardous to reason towards the future on their basis as it would have been, a thousand years before Jesus, to do so in terms of the material and cultural premises of the Bronze Age civilizations. Novelty has always to be allowed for, if not believed in. Spengler, Toynbee, *et al.*, may still be right in seeing the present as a period of decline that will end relatively soon in the collapse or paralysis of Western civilization, in accordance with the pattern followed by all other high civilizations so far; nevertheless science and industrialism do, and will, make a great difference, and the future is likely to present a scheme, and possibilities, radically different from those of the expired or moribund civilizations we already know. Many of the conditions under which a flourishing culture again becomes possible will therefore be different from those that made one possible in the past.

It would be wiser, accordingly, not to speculate so exclusively on the basis of past precedent. Rather we ought to examine more closely the situation of culture here and now, and try to ascertain its inherent tendencies and drift, to see what in the situation is so new that it cannot be understood in terms of anything we know from the past.

II

AS HAS been observed, culture in the urban, industrial West is now stratified on three main levels. First, there is commercialized, "mass," "popular," "jukebox," or "lowbrow" culture; then there is "middlebrow" culture; and finally—and traditionally—high or "highbrow" culture.* All three belong to the city; rural, folk, or peasant culture is now, for the first time since it appeared thousands of years ago, practically extinct over much of the countryside in the Western world. This in itself amounts to a very radical piece of novelty. What, however, is almost equally novel is that the stratification of culture no longer coincides as uniformly as before with class lines. Whereas in the past the culture of the highest level usually received the greatest social as well as economic support, today the greatest economic support is given to the bottom level, and the greatest social support to the middle. Yet the uppermost level still carries the main history of culture, and exerts the most influence on the other levels.

The culture of the majority of the *rich* in a country like ours has by now become definitely middlebrow, with only a small minority directly supporting highbrow culture. The middle classes furnish more customers in absolute numbers for lowbrow than middlebrow culture, yet still make up the bulk of

* "Highbrow," "middlebrow," and "lowbrow" are terms of brutal simplification. Nor were they coined to denote types of culture so much as types of social personality, and all three in an invidious sense—as if any kind of personal culture were a foible, and all the more a legitimate object of ridicule because revealed in one's physiognomy. But I am afraid that no other terms available fit the realities I am trying to deal with as well as these three. And the reader, I feel sure, will understand immediately what they mean, and at the same time realize that the distinctions they make are not hard and fast ones.

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the audience for the latter. Everybody with a high school education gets at least a taste of middlebrow culture, and almost everybody in American society comes in daily contact with the lowbrow variety. Only among the poorest classes, who can be presumed to belong altogether to the lowbrow audience, does social level seem to determine cultural level as consistently as it used to do.

The middle, for a variety of reasons, has become the crucial level as far as social power is concerned, and deserves special attention. At the same time it is the most difficult level to define. "Middlebrow" is no longer a term with which to "relieve one's feelings," but means a very large if disorderly piece of reality. Eliot remarks in his book on the desirability of "a structure of society in which there will be, from 'top' to 'bottom,' a continuous gradation of cultural levels. . . ." This is not as lacking in an advanced industrial country like our own as he seems to imply. There is a vast distance between high culture and lowbrow—vaster, perhaps, than anything similar in the past—but it is covered without apparent break by the infinite shadings and gradings of middlebrow culture, which is defined roughly by the fact that, though its audience shrinks from the trials of highbrow culture, it nonetheless refuses to let its culture be simply a matter of entertainment and diversion on the lowbrow order. Middlebrow culture has to do in one way or another with self-improvement, and is born almost always out of the desire and effort of newly ascended social classes to rise culturally as well.

SOMETHING like middlebrow culture emerged in Western Europe in the 17th century—say, with Bunyan and Defoe in England—but did not quite establish a separate identity, and so remained for a time more or less tributary to aristocratic and patrician high culture. It was during the 19th century, as industrialism raised newer, rawer, and larger middle classes out of petty bourgeois or proletarian obscurity, and these tried to turn high culture to their own purposes, that middlebrow culture began really to differentiate itself. However, these new classes, for all their buying power, did not yet form a large enough proportion of society to upset the old balance between huge sweating majority and small leisured minority upon which traditional high culture had depended so far; they could still be assimilated, or at least controlled, by the old educated classes. Therefore middlebrow culture remained an ambiguous thing, largely subservient to high culture in social prestige if not economic power. Only within the last decades, and chiefly in this country, has this relation changed, and middlebrow culture acquired a positive identity and become an unmistakable force.

The revolutionary cultural phenomenon of the recent past has been not so much the spread of "mass" or lowbrow culture—which was already here a hundred years ago—as the rapid expansion of the middlebrow kind and the multiplication of its degrees and shades. This is owing to the appearance, for the first time, of a middle class large enough to amount to a *mass*, if not a majority—a mass that is now, thanks to industrial prosperity, in the material position at least to aspire to the kind of culture that used to be the exclusive prerogative of a small minority. This position does not automatically produce aspirations towards higher culture—in the 1920's the newest, and largest, American middle class did not feel them—yet material ease does in the long run tend to awaken them if only because culture, and cultivation, assert social status.

Behind the shrill and spectacular lowbrow culture that holds the foreground of American life, just such aspirations have begun lately to spread in ever widening circles as standards of living are consolidated and continue to rise. The fact is being remarked upon in many places. Whatever its immediate causes, the "culture boom" that started shortly before the recent war was due, fundamentally, to the settling in of the enormous new middle class created by the more rapid development of industrialism after 1914, and to the coming of age of its second generation. And the largest increment by far of this boom has to be booked

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to the account of our middlebrow culture.*

HIGH culture, however—authentic, disinterested culture—has so far suffered more than it has gained in the process. Being, among other things, the expression of unconscious taste and habit, of assumptions that never get stated, of a way of life and an ingrained sense of proportion, it has as a rule to begin being acquired during childhood, from the immediate and everyday just as much as from books and works of art. The antecedents of the new middle classes do not lie in such childhoods; higher culture comes to them from the outside, in adolescence at most, and has to be acquired by conscious effort, therefore tends to remain somewhat external and artificial. According to everything we know so far, Eliot is right when he repeats that the family is still "by far the most important channel of transmission of culture." Nor is this the whole story.

Other handicaps are imposed by the very scale and rapidity (both proportional and absolute) with which the new American middle classes have been expanding. Every generation since the Civil War, but especially since 1918, has brought a new mass of people to the social surface. And each new mass, being larger usually than the one before, yet quickly rising to the same social level, has acted as a drag, culturally, on its predecessors. The traditional structure of culture, which could assimilate these newcomers as long as they arrived in limited numbers and at sufficient intervals, cannot maintain itself when they come in such steady and huge throngs (the increase of the population in absolute figures alone is enough to unsettle the situation). By sheer demographic weight and buying power, the newcomers force all levels of the cultural market down to meet the lower standards they bring with them from their culturally inferior origins. The old upper classes become helpless in the matter. Nor, for that matter, do these classes enjoy the prestige in connection with culture that the old upper classes of, say, England do, and they are that much the less able to maintain the continuity of traditional standards—which are in their care if they are in anyone's—with enough authority to tame parvenus.

At the same time lowbrow, "machine," commercial culture is there everywhere to offer its relief to all those who find any sort of higher culture too much of an effort—lowbrow culture being powerful not only because it is "easy" and still suits the majority, but also because it has replaced folk culture as the culture of *all* childhood, and thereby become our "natural," "autochthonous" culture. (And, unlike folk culture, lowbrow culture neither contributes—at least not fundamentally—to high culture nor effaces itself in its social presence.)

Armed with their new wealth, their optimism, and their political power, the new American middle classes have in this situation been able to ask with more confidence and success than any upstart class before them that high culture be delivered to them by a compromise, precisely, with their limitations. Hence, above all, middlebrow culture.

The liberal and fine arts of tradition, as well as its scholarship, have been "democratized"—simplified, streamlined, purged of whatever cannot be made easily accessible, and this in large measure by the same rationalizing, "processing," and "packaging" methods by which industrialism has already made lowbrow culture a distinctive product of itself. Almost all types of knowledge and almost all forms of art are stripped, digested, synopsized, "surveyed," or abridged. The result achieved in those who patronize this kind of capsulated culture is, perhaps, a re-

*A similar boom started in England—and in Scandinavia, too—in the late 1930's, and the causes were somewhat the same. However, the spread of higher living standards may have been less of an immediate factor abroad than the popularization of socialist ideas—which meant increased self-awareness on the part of lower classes and, with that, a desire for adult education and an interest in self-education in general. The most typical phenomena of the British culture boom are the BBC's Third Program, with its magazine, *The Listener*, and the success of the Penguin books, whereas the emphasis in America is not so much on self-education as on gentility, correctness of taste, knowingness, "gracious living"—that is, emblems of status.

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spect for culture as such, and a kind of knowingness, but it has very little to do with higher culture as something lived.

The middlebrow in us wants the treasures of civilization for himself, but the desire is without appetite. He feels nostalgia for what he imagines the past to have been, and reads historical novels, but in the spirit of a tourist who enjoys the scenes he visits because of their lack of resemblance to those he has come from and will return to. A sense of continuity with the past, a continuity at least of truth, of enduring relevance, belongs to genuine culture almost by definition, but this is precisely what the middlebrow does not acquire (the fault is not entirely his own). He might be able to do so, eventually, by exerting humility and patience, but these he is somehow never able to muster in the face of culture. In his reading, no matter how much he wants to edify himself, he will balk at anything that sends him to the dictionary or a reference book more than once. (Curiosity without energy or tenacity is a middlebrow trait wherever and in whomever it appears.) Towards his entertainment, no matter how much he wants it to be "significant" and "worthwhile," he will become recalcitrant if the "significance" is not labeled immediately and obviously, and if too many conditioned reflexes are left without appropriate stimuli. What the middlebrow, even more conspicuously than the lowbrow, wants most is to have his expectations filled exactly as he expects to have them filled.

Middlebrow culture, because of the way in which it is produced, consumed, and transmitted, reinforces everything else in our present civilization that promotes standardization and inhibits idiosyncrasy, temperament, and strong-mindedness; it functions as order and organization but without ordering or organizing. In principle, it cannot master and preserve fresh experience or express and form that which has not already been expressed and formed. Thus it fails, like lowbrow culture, to accomplish what is, perhaps, the most important task of culture for people who live in a changing, *historical* society: it cannot maintain continuity in the face of novelty, but must always forget and replace its own products.

But I said "in principle." Like lowbrow, middlebrow culture is not all of a piece. The good and the bad are mixed, all the way from Class A movies and the *Reader's Digest* through *The Saturday Evening Post* and *South Pacific* to the *Times Book Review* and Rouault. Middlebrow art, if not middlebrow learning or thought, is not wholly adulteration and dilution. Novelists like Hemingway, Faulkner, Fitzgerald, and O'Hara can profit as well as lose by a certain middlebrow impatience with intellectual distinctions that enables them to make new distinctions in experience itself. And while the middlebrow's respect for culture may be too pious and undifferentiated, it has worked to save the traditional facilities of culture—the printed word, the concert, lecture, museum, etc.—from that complete debauching which the movies, radio, and television have suffered under lowbrow and advertising culture. And it would be hard to deny that some sort of enlightenment does seem to be spread on the broader levels of the industrial city by middlebrow culture, and certain avenues of taste opened. Just as, in general, an authoritative part of the public has begun to show a greater sense of responsibility towards disinterested culture, and to censor its own philistine impulses.

But doesn't the damage still outweigh the gains, and can any amount of improvement at the lower levels compensate for deterioration at the highest, where the most authentic manifestations still have their being, where the forms and values of every other level originate—no matter how perverted subsequently—and where our experience is still most significantly and enduringly preserved?

[*Mr. Greenberg's conclusion, to appear next month, argues that the problem of high culture under industrialism requires a solution that would modify industrialism itself.*]

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A YOUNG FRENCHMAN DISCOVERS AMERICA

Some Notes After a Year in New York

MICHEL FOUGERES

MY ARRIVAL was all I could have wished it to be; even the bad weather, which delayed our ship several hours so that we approached the port at low tide, proved advantageous, for we had to await the next high tide to enter, and this meant coming in well after dark. When we steamed up the bay, both banks of the Hudson were making a show of their lights, which became denser and more brilliant with our progress, and finally there appeared before us, in all their splendor, the skyscrapers of New York, lit to the gills, drunk with electricity, just as I had imagined them, just as they had been described to me. But now they were real, I was there. I felt my heart leap, and the other passengers around me—those, that is, who also saw this spectacle for the first time—burst into cries and exclamations, pressed along the railings trying to get a better view, and in a sudden burst of warmth took one another by the hand.

When finally the ship was moored, I looked attentively at the automobile lights speeding along the shore, and, a bit higher, there were all those fixed or changing lights of the buildings, and already I recognized in the arrangement something eminently *different*. I asked myself: "Is it true that tomorrow I will be able to go farther in? That I will really be there, inside?"

I had dreamed of America for years—dreamed in the literal sense of the word; some years ago, in Indo-China, during the course of twelve days of tropical fever (which barely missed finishing me), I had traveled, babbling and delirious, into the most extraordinary, the most marvelous future world—the most terrifying also—and this future world I had sometimes confused in my mind with an America of planetary dimensions. Now on the point of disembarking in New York, I did not, in fact, expect to recognize in it the place that I had dreamed of; and yet, perhaps there would be a resemblance. . . .

WHEN I emerged from the dock, towards noon, I was much disappointed to find that nobody had come to welcome me; I had hoped that at least one of my uncles would be there. I had with me only the fifty dollars which I had been told one had to have in order to land—though, in fact, no one had questioned me at all in this regard.

What was I going to do, alone in this immense city? I was already in the street—my first American street!—but there was no time to marvel. It seemed to me that I was frightfully unprovided for; and I took it almost as a direct injustice to me that there was no information service to help me, that I had been allowed in this unceremonious way to spill myself into the street, and there left to my fate.

I decided to look first of all for temporary lodging at the YMCA, of which I had

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REPORTING to their compatriots on the state of our nation and national character, recent intellectual visitors from overseas have for the most part repainted in darker hues the traditional negative stereotypes. Sometimes, however, the fresh eye of youth makes discoveries, and here we offer with some pleasure a report by a twenty-nine-year-old Frenchman, made after spending a year among us. MICHEL FOUGERES has written for *Les Temps Modernes* in Paris, and is now preparing a book for publication in that city. He was born in Paris, educated in France and Belgium, and spent two years with the French forces in Indo-China. As he informs us in this article, he is now employed as a counterman in Manhattan, and finds that position an excellent point of vantage for carrying on his affectionate study of the natives.

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heard. An express service undertook to transport my baggage for three dollars; it seemed to me that at this rate my slender hoard would be quickly spent. For myself, I chose to go by bus. Someone told me that I should ask for a *transfer*. When the bus came by, I got on and asked for a transfer to 34th Street, but was unprepared for the little machine in which the other passengers were dropping their coins. "This is America," I told myself, "the land of machines!" The bus driver did his best to explain something to me, making it apparent that he thought me completely stupid. Finally, he took from me the sum required and put it in the machine himself. I thought: "If only I can manage in the future without taking the bus!"

I watched the streets vividly as we drove along, and I was soon disillusioned; I had taken it for granted that in this land all the houses were clean and white, but there were rows and rows of red brick buildings with ugly iron fire escapes, and papers on the ground. Was this possible even in America?

I also had the impression that everybody stared at me. For my part, I could not keep myself from scrutinizing the faces around me, the clothes, the movements. I thought: "They have been Americans all their lives!"

I got to the YMCA, engaged a room, and went to the cafeteria, where it seemed to me that everyone was dressed in his Sunday best—impeccable shirt, bright tie, good suit well pressed. I thought there must be some explanation. Since they were eating at the YMCA these people could not be rich. Could it be they were all on vacation? Then the notion struck me that perhaps they were gangsters, for indeed they looked exactly like the gangsters I had seen in certain American films: the same ties, the chewing gum. . . .

After I had eaten, the thought came to me that I could perhaps find my uncles' phone numbers in the telephone book. I consulted it. Next came an explanation of how to manipulate the American telephone (not greatly different from the French), and finally I got my uncle on the wire. It seems that my uncles had been at the dock at ten o'clock that morning. They were not permitted to board the ship, and after an hour concluded that I had been detained by the immigration authorities. One of them had already phoned his lawyer to discuss what should be done. I was warmly congratulated for having managed to find my way by bus, and was given full details about how to reach them by subway.

I was received with embraces, given another lunch, asked all sorts of questions. Then one of my uncles undertook to instruct me on the kind of life one must lead in America. "Don't talk of unhappiness," he said when I alluded to my past mishaps. "Here, it simply doesn't exist! And you should forget about your book, and all such absurdities, and long hair, and that sort of thing—you won't find such things here either. In America, one has to be well dressed at all times, clean, neat, hair in place; this is absolutely essential. One constantly meets people without a penny to their name, but nobody could tell from their appearance that they are not millionaires."

And that covered the whole matter so far as he was concerned. He made me a present of several shirts and suits, and with these I was to become happy; all that remained was to try to make as much money as possible, and he was even ready to give me a start at that if I wanted to become a traveling salesman like him. "Why waste your time trying to produce a work of art?" he said. "Artists only become famous after death. Could you go into a restaurant, show the cashier your book, and ask him to give you a plate of soup for it?"

That very evening another uncle took me for a drive in a handsome car through Central Park, and then down Fifth Avenue, and I saw again the lights of Manhattan, this time with a new wonder; for this time I saw them from "inside." Never mind what my future in this country might be. The radio spilled its waves of melody; everything was beautiful; we were in the center of this life; my dream had not been false.

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The first nights, I spent a lot of time in my room, absorbing New York through the window and listening to the jazz over the radio. I left my radio on all night; what trumpet players they had here, what pianists, what orchestras! I also went one evening to the Stuyvesant Casino, which I had heard about in Paris. The atmosphere was intoxicating and enthusiastic; but I had come alone, and I was not happy. How could I manage to meet interesting people? I had been given an introduction to a charming family, but I quickly discovered that in New York even old friends rarely get to see each other if they live in different boroughs.

Of course, there were my own relatives, who loaned me money and had me to dinner, which was a great help. But often when I was with my aunts and uncles I felt myself miserably alone; they thought only of their work as traveling salesmen, of earning money, buying expensive clothes, eating well, owning expensive cars. I had not yet found any regular work; the only thing I knew with certainty was that I did not want to be a traveling salesman; I had had too much of that kind of work in France, where selling is almost the only possible occupation if one does not have some special training or profession and wants to lead a materially decent life. While waiting for something better, I got myself a job teaching French at the Berlitz School; but, being the latest comer, I was employed for only a few hours a day, and did not earn enough.

This problem took on more importance as the days passed, and I began to take more and more bitter note of all that was disagreeable in my situation. Six weeks after my arrival, I found myself suddenly at the end of my rope, completely disenchanted. All these skyscrapers were nothing but masses of cold stone without life. People lived here as elsewhere—a little more comfortably perhaps, but where was that special and fascinating atmosphere which, in my dreams and expectations, had been America? Americans were just like everyone else, and they had one particular fault: they were just too prosaic. They came, went, worked, went to the movies. What was there for me in all this? With whom could I communicate? Many times as I strolled below the skyscrapers of central Manhattan, I recalled a phrase read I cannot remember where: "New York reeks with human solitude!" And I had known Americans in Paris who said, "America is nothing." Were they right?

One morning, filled with sad reflections, I went to the barber and there heard, mauled over and over again, a tune which had been played and replayed over the radio almost every day since my arrival. Songs are never repeated so frequently in Europe, even when they are very popular; and in my state of mind at the moment, this music, which was supposed to be joyful, was only a brutal intrusion on my consciousness. I conceived for it and for what it represented a great horror, and that evening I wrote an almost desperate letter to my friends in France, saying that everything was commercialized in this country, everything was soulless, my friends had been right to warn me against forming illusions, and my dearest desire was to get back to Europe as soon as possible. The next morning I expressed these feelings to my uncles; they agreed that if I could not adapt myself to this country, the best thing for me would be to return to Europe, and they offered to pay my passage.

But then I began to feel a certain shame. Only six weeks. . . . How could I weakly throw in my hand without having tried anything further? I resolved to stay a little longer.

The first thing, of course, was to find a regular job. But I was afraid. With my faltering English, who would take me on? As for the French firms, I did not want to set foot in them; apart from the fact that the French never help their compatriots abroad —quite the contrary, in fact—French firms have the reputation of paying a good deal less than their American competitors. And besides, I had not come to America to remain among Frenchmen.

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I went to one employment agency after another; I was ready to do "no matter what"; but in general I was told that my education was too "academic" to be of use. My weakness is that I am easily discouraged. And the fact is that there is scarcely anything as depressing as scurrying about in this fashion, particularly if one fears that one's efforts will be in vain. On the morning of the third day I told myself: "If I have not found something by the end of the week, I shall return to France."

During this period I began to observe, and for the first time, that America was not at all so much of a piece as I had conceived it to be. Each agency I visited had a markedly different atmosphere; one was ill kept, and the personnel inspired little confidence; others, while hardly disagreeable outwardly, were staffed by persons who would not take the slightest trouble to help one in any way whatever; other agencies were from the first sight prepossessing, orderly, staffed with amiable persons whose good will was unmistakable. I thus made the naive discovery that it was possible to find varying milieus and very different sorts of people; it was just a question of where one looked. But if this was indeed the case, then the people of America could not possibly be so "standardized" as they were said to be. It followed that even I might yet find the milieu to suit me.

In one of the more attractive agencies, I was asked if I did not prefer office to factory work, and then was sent off with a ticket to some large company. It was hard to believe that finally an agency had offered me something! But I would certainly not be found acceptable by my prospective employers once they heard me speak. I had learned English in France but still spoke it with a marked French accent.

When I entered the office it seemed that everyone was working at incredible speed, the typewriters racing, employees rushing from room to room with papers. I had heard that Americans worked fast; could I find myself a spot in such an office? The head of the personnel department asked me some questions, and then described what my duties would be. I kept nodding, though I was far too unnerved to understand anything he said, and when he told me that the firm *would be glad to have me* I could hardly believe it.

In the morning I was introduced to a young man who showed me around the various floors, and quickly put me at ease. It still seemed to me that I could scarcely feel at home in these surroundings, but my new companion told me again and again that the work was simple enough and that I would be able to manage. And so I began to carry out his instructions.

A young woman came up to ask if everything was all right; then she slapped me on the back and said, "Don't worry." Others did the same. I was struck by the sympathetic atmosphere, and I could not but compare it mentally with the coarse tricks, the nastiness, the vulgar abuse heaped on a "newcomer" on almost any job in France, Belgium, and elsewhere.

I was to remain in this office for six months, and during all that time I continued to find the general atmosphere wonderfully heartening. It astonished me to hear employees complain about the firm, asserting that the people were disagreeable, conditions of work uncomfortable, etc., etc., and I could not keep from replying at times: "If you find all this so bad, what would you say if you were an office worker in Europe? You don't know how lucky you are!"

Almost every day somebody passed around candies or chocolates in celebration of his or her birthday. I found this most extraordinary. Sometimes drinks were passed around. It seemed as if each day provided a new pretext for celebration. Sometimes a collection was made for someone who was sick, or to buy a present for someone who was leaving the firm or getting married. I said to myself: "How open-hearted these Americans are! Never would such consideration be shown in Europe." And the office head did not complain of these time-wasting activities!

I learned the meaning of the expression

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"goofing off." I noticed that people spent not a little time smoking and gossiping in the washroom. I was stupefied to see them make phone calls during working hours, and at the company's expense. To think that in France it was believed that the motto regulating American life was: "Time is money." So far as I am concerned, the expression I heard most often expressed a quite different attitude. It was: "Take it easy."

I soon had a chance to observe also that respect for the personalities of others which is very general in America. There was one elevator boy who used perfume heavily, favored showy, light-colored suits, powdered his long black hair to be more "distinguished looking," and wore it differently each day; moreover, he had a way of talking and moving so obviously feminine that there could be no mistake: he was what the Americans call a "queer." In France, he would not keep his job for two days. Nasty remarks would be made in his hearing, and if the boss himself failed to notice anything untoward, it would soon be brought to his attention in some way—a little scandal would be cooked up, seasoned with a few lies, and the offender against conformity would have to be fired for order to be restored. Here, in this American firm, no one seemed to notice that there was anything peculiar about the boy; no one talked about him; everyone was as courteous to him as to anyone else. Little by little I came to understand that Americans simply are not interested in the pleasure to be gained from sniffing around in someone else's life. To a European, this simple experience of respect for the human personality was marvelous. I remembered that one of my relatives, a woman who had traveled much and suffered from a serious and visible infirmity, had remarked one day that America was the only country in the world where people did not turn to look at her when she passed. And as I thought about it, it seemed to me that more than one person in this firm was being given a chance that would not have been offered in France; besides the elevator boy, there was myself, whose English was by no means what it should have been, and there were lame and crippled workers who would not find it easy to get jobs in Paris, where bosses are always afraid of losing money on handicapped workers. It is true: in America they give you a break.

I observed also with astonishment and pleasure how the office heads talked with the workers and office help, in the elevator and elsewhere, in intimate and familiar terms, and I was bowled over one day to hear a co-worker of mine address the new head of the entire organization as "Eddie." It would be unthinkable in France.

THE union contract with the firm expired and a new one had to be negotiated. There were workers' meetings, discussions with company representatives, sharp words, threats of a strike. At union meetings, the leaders were accused by rank and file members of playing a double game, of not being frank, of placing their interests above those of the workers, etc., etc. All harmony among the workers themselves, between workers and management, between workers and the union heads, seemed completely disrupted. At last an agreement was reached for a new contract, and the atmosphere quickly became what it had been before. It was as if all the sharp words, the accusations, even the insults had been totally forgotten; such behavior is so different from what one sees in France that I began to ask myself if the Americans do not regard business discussions, and social and political struggles, as a kind of "game"; good players do not bear grudges.

I was equally surprised at the almost complete absence of political class-consciousness among Americans. The Republican convention was approaching, and there was much talk about the candidates. One of the lowest-paid workers in the place told me that she would like to see Taft win. I asked her whether she could overlook the Taft-Hartley bill. She replied: "Oh, I know that Taft is not for the workers, but in private life he's a fine fellow!" In France, a woman who talked like that would be regarded as somewhat crazy.

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ONE day I took the subway to Greenwich Village, bought a map, and began to scour around. As I did not understand the map too well, I stopped a passerby to ask for information. At that moment an acquaintance of his came up to greet him, and hearing me speak, offered to tell me what I wanted to know in a French that was by no means bad. We chatted about various things, about Europe especially. I was invited to a party, where I met several young men and women, then to other such gatherings, and thus little by little I acquired some friends. It made a great difference.

As time went on, my need for a dentist could no longer be overlooked. And I had wanted for a long time to buy an electric razor and some new clothes. But as I was obliged to send some money to France each week to pay certain debts, I could not satisfy these new needs out of my salary. So I got a job as a dishwasher in a country club on weekends, and after six weeks I had saved enough money to get my teeth fixed and buy the electric razor I had so long yearned for. This bit of enterprise was so simple, so easily brought off and practical, I was overcome with enthusiasm, and wrote to my French friends: was it not extraordinary that by working at the lowest-paid job in America one could buy things that in Europe are regarded as luxuries?

Towards the end of 1952 our offices were transferred to New Jersey, and I decided to quit rather than make the long trip every day. So now I am working as a counterman in Manhattan, and while such a job can hardly be a "career" for me, I am happy in it for the present, and I earn more than I did in the office. Once again, I think as Americans do: "What one does" is not so important; what counts is results.

I have a great liking for all the Americans who come to my counter and, in a tone of voice so generally inoffensive, say, "Give me a cup of coffee, please," or call me "Mac" though they have never seen me before. When some of the coffee spills over into the saucer as I serve it, I am always surprised that the customers do not object, often merely pouring the contents of the saucer back into the cup; what they care about is good coffee—something rare in America, by the way—and they want the cup and saucer to be clean; for the rest, they are not fussy.

I MENTION these little character traits because I have been much struck by the pessimism with which certain Americans envisage American society, and put its future in question. If I were to judge America by what I have heard such people say, I would have to conclude that it is not at all the great country it appears to be, but, on the contrary, a sort of desperate human amalgamation marred by every kind of defect and destined for the darkest future, if not for complete collapse fairly soon—a country with neither art nor kindliness, neither beauty nor courage. I had heard that tune played in Paris. . . .

This kind of talk never fails to provoke me, and I have spent hours arguing with Americans, telling them Americans are good-hearted and want to develop themselves, and that in the future new and great talents will appear in all fields. In my opinion, the attitude that tends to denigrate everything American can only be compared to the attitude of a spoiled child who can see nothing good in what he has and envies only what he sees in the hands of the less privileged around him. And sometimes, in these discussions, my interlocutors will remark with a smile of evident satisfaction: "What you say is very reassuring," as if they had just discovered some marvelous world whose existence they had not even suspected.

I remember especially one of these discussions which took a somewhat different turn. A young girl declared that, like many of her fellow citizens, she had been overwhelmed by Stevenson's defeat, and had been forced—again, like a great many others—to consider it a sort of proof of the stupidity of the American people; but now she had come to feel that if so many people, who after all were not all idiots, had sincerely thought it best to vote for Eisenhower, why

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then one had to yield, and perhaps it would turn out that they had been right. Others who were present went on to declare that America was not necessarily "lost"—that from the point of view of art, one had to admit a serious effort was being made by the people as a whole to understand; from the political and social point of view, with regard to racism for instance, it was evident that much progress had already been made; and in all fields the Americans had given proof of that manifest good will which had so struck me shortly after my arrival—a good will which cannot be duplicated elsewhere. This time, at last, I found myself in an optimistic and intellectually clear-headed atmosphere, and I glowed with satisfaction.

SOMETHING else struck me very favorably: from the moment I arrived, and that was to see so much Jewish advertising in the subways, newspapers, and so on: ads for kosher food, appeals for help to Israel, notices of Jewish holidays. One rarely sees anything like it in France. The French Jews are afraid to call attention to themselves, and in the Paris subways the only thing one is likely to see suggesting that a Jewish population exists in France are the words chalked on the walls: *"Les juifs à la porte!"*—"Kick the Jews out!"

It is a remarkable fact that this country—accused constantly of a want of originality and diversity—permits all sorts of "ethnic" groups—Jewish, Irish, Polish, etc.—to organize and prosper in its midst, all making a great noise about their attachment to the country or the culture from which they stem. To a foreigner, it is one of the marvels of America that it has no fear of permitting its people to talk and write Yiddish or German, if they wish, and at the same time is quite confident that the nation's intrinsic cohesive force, its *raison d'être,* will in the end make them all into Americans.

I had heard it said in Paris by a Frenchman—not Jewish—who had returned from America, "The only people I like in America are the Jews, because they are Jews first and Americans only afterwards." This remark seemed very strange to me, and rather unpleasing, for if it was true it would mean that the American Jews were devoted to a nationalism which does not correspond to their citizenship and which could only have its source in racism (let us not fear to use the word), whether avowed or not. But my stay in America has for me totally discredited this traveler's testimony. Whether among my personal acquaintances, at the YMHA, or elsewhere, I have observed time and again how the Jews in America bear the stamp of Americanism upon them. This can be seen of course much more clearly among the younger Jews, and I should say that it is those of the younger generation that I have been most thrown in contact with; it is to be seen in their ways of talking, dressing, in their daily behavior, in their pleasures and their manner of pursuing them, in their concern with the vicissitudes of American politics, in their love of baseball and prize-fighting—indeed, I must say I find this last somewhat amusing as well as symptomatic: Jewish "sports"!

THE Jews of Israel, then, are not mistaken in thinking of American Jewish tourists as simply "the Americans." One need only read the posters in this country urging "aid to Israel." Why aid Israel? The posters say nothing of the Bible or of the Talmud; they urge us instead to aid Israel in order to support progress and democracy in the Near East. I have sometimes imagined that one might add: "and to defend the American way of life."

I have had less contact with the older generations or with more recent immigrants. Among them, certainly, there are large numbers who are far from "Americanized." One of my uncles, who seems to be greatly disturbed whenever he encounters any of these more "obvious" Jews—and he believes that he encounters them everywhere and every day—says of them, "They are not like us—with their thick noses, their crafty manners, their loud voices," etc., etc. In the street when he runs into someone wearing a black hat, a beard, and a shabby caftan, he cannot keep

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from exclaiming under his breath, "Our 'brother'!"

As for myself, when I have now and then seen such Jews, I have been struck by the fact that no one turns to stare at them or indeed seems to notice them at all. And what is the meaning of their presence except that they constitute one more element in the immense variety of this country of "conformism" and "standardization"?

I have changed my address more than once, for I have constantly sought better lodging at a more reasonable price. I went from the YMCA to the YMHA, and I must not neglect to praise these organizations, which again are not duplicated in France. What struck me most of all was their social attitude. At the YMCA, I was dumbfounded to see a bulletin board announcing the schedules of religious services not merely at various Protestant churches, but also at synagogues and Catholic churches. Such a thing would be inconceivable in France. At the YMHA one is not asked, when signing the register, whether one is a Jew; some non-Jews live there. It is not for me to generalize hastily from these facts; I have heard much of racial and religious prejudice in this country, "restricted" neighborhoods, etc. But I have also seen evident proofs of good will between groups. And it seems to me that this good will is the most striking trait of the American character.

A friend of mine, who works not far from my counter in a store specializing in souvenirs, fancy penknives, and all sorts of gadgets, has told me of the surprise he feels in seeing businessmen, in from other cities, come into the store and play like children with all these gadgets, opening them, winding them up, setting them off, puzzling over the trick mechanisms, and often enough buying them for toys. "When I think that these men undoubtedly have heavy responsibilities, I am flabbergasted. What a country we're in!" I replied that this was just what I found admirable and fascinating about Americans: they are capable of accomplishing the most difficult tasks—often more expertly than Europeans—while preserving the youthful side of their character. With all their "maturity," Europeans have a smallness of soul—in addition to their other faults—which, let us hope, the Americans will never imitate.

EVERYTHING considered, the strongest and most wonderful impression America gives, despite the present political struggles, is that of freedom. One has to know the streets of Paris, encumbered with uniformed police night and day, to know what I mean. In America there are no identity cards. You use whatever name you please. There are no complications about working. No one picks a fight. On this score, at any rate, many of my compatriots fully agree with me: "In this country, they let you alone." That's a lot.

When I spoke to one of my aunts about that very sense of freedom, she remarked: "There is nothing surprising about it. Everybody feels himself to be free here."

I have read much, both in the French and the American press, about the "witch-hunt" which is said to be destroying reputations far and wide in this country and creating fear even among people who have never been interested in politics. When I was in France I thought I could detect very clearly the existence of such an atmosphere in America. But after a few months here I began to feel that if the air in America is really "unbreathable" at present, then America must have been a veritable paradise when things were still "normal."

I did, however, have a personal experience that somewhat tempered my optimism. I found myself no longer invited to a house I had frequented because my remarks on French colonialism in Indo-China (where I had spent two years with the French army), and my criticism of American policy in backing up the French, apparently got me labeled as "some kind of radical." The host, a government employee, seems to have taken fright. To what extent his alarm was objectively justified, I am in no position to say.

It is true that the crowds of people walking up and down the streets seem to have very little interest in politics, but that's because other things occupy them. Fifty times a day

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you hear the question: "What's the score?" For several weeks I did see crowds surrounding the newsstands, but it was because they were anxious for the latest details of the "vice ring," a scandal so grotesque in the eyes of a Frenchman that I asked myself whether it might not be true, after all, that Americans are babies. And more recently it has been "Christine"—Christine here, Christine there: "Have you heard the latest about Christine?"

These preoccupations hardly bear out the picture of an America of "warmongers" and "hysterical witch-hunters" that is painted in Europe. They do point, however, to another element in the American climate which may in the long run hold more danger than "witch-hunting"—that is, the widespread ignorance and lack of interest in political and social problems on a world scale. This ignorance and indifference seem to me almost as great among the educated as in the "man in the street," and they do much to encourage serious blunders in American foreign policy and propaganda. That freedom to cultivate one's own personality, and that almost instinctive resistance to ideology, which do so much to give America its characteristic atmosphere of openness and freedom, are also not without their drawbacks.

One reservation. I have not been able to adjust myself to the attitudes of American women: I just don't understand them; it seems to me, in fact, that this incomprehension is the lot of all foreigners who come here—if there is any consolation in that. I find the women well-groomed, frequently beautiful, and not always futile; they have judgment, intelligence often enough, and, doubtless, feeling; they know their way around and are helpful and generous. But when all this is said, what do they represent? That question I have not been able to answer; perhaps the fault is mine, perhaps I have not searched enough, perhaps I have not got to know them well enough. What irritates me most is their way of saying "I am free" as if the remark contained all wisdom and answered all questions. Indeed they *are* free, free to come and go alone without danger of being followed in the street—how many European women would consider this an advantage?—and free to flirt without committing themselves. So what? I dare not venture to call them hypocritical, considering how little I know of them. But in general they give me the impression of being ambitious mannequins rather than real women. I've heard it said that their general attitude stems from their education and the Puritan tradition. But how criticize what one does not understand completely?

Oh, yes, one more reservation. If I am asked whether there is not something in America which I absolutely detest, I have an answer: pumpkin pie.

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RELIGIOUS MODERNISM STIRS IN ISRAEL

Orthodoxy Faces a Challenge of Faith

JUDD L. TELLER

IN RECENT years Israel has been experiencing something of a religious renascence. The clamorous political demands and strident propaganda of the Religious Bloc have obscured the fact that a number of the country's leading intellectuals—many of whom would hardly qualify as religious by the standards of the various traditional clerical groups—have embarked on a serious quest for faith and are sharply questioning whether Israel's future lies with secularism.

The state of public morality in Israel, the bitter partisan struggles that rend communal settlements, the marked division between the *vatikim* (old settlers) and the recent immigrants still huddling in the *maabarot*—all these discords and divisions have started more than a few people to thinking and questioning. Some of them have even cast a longing eye at the Diaspora and asked: Why shouldn't Israel try to recover the great spiritual assets of the Galut, especially its religious faith and theological discipline, from which Jewry for untold generations drew its moral sustenance?

THERE is still another reason for this quest for faith on the part of the East European intelligentsia in Israel. Everything came late to East European Jewry, and the effects of this tardiness are still being felt in Israel today.

A highly restricted emancipation was granted Russian Jewry a century after the French had proclaimed the Rights of Man. The Haskalah, the movement for self-emancipation launched in Russia and Galicia at the turn of the 19th century, did not seriously affect the multitude of the people until the eve of World War I, at which time socialist slogans began to penetrate the barriers of the Pale. Although Jews had taken part in the struggles for national independence waged by the countries of Eastern Europe, notably Poland and Hungary, it was not until the turn of the 20th century that they began to think of cultural autonomy for themselves in Eastern Europe and political independence in Palestine.

The East European Jewish intelligentsia was dazzled by all these prospects of freedom suddenly disclosed to it, by this seeming millennium waiting on the threshold. Cramming all these "goals" and *Weltanschauungen* into their suitcases, they brought them to Zionist Palestine.

But now these original pioneers have gone through their crises of disillusionment and matured. Zionism is the only promise that has been realized. Their faith in socialism, international brotherhood, and the great age a-coming has been shattered by the hard blows of 20th-century history. The world

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THE pressing mundane troubles that beset the State of Israel have naturally monopolized the attention of most observers of the Israeli scene, both in that country and elsewhere. Religion in Israel, when it is paid any attention at all, is generally thought to be exclusively the province of the Orthodox parties making up the Religious Bloc. In fact, however, there have been the stirrings of a religious revival in Israel which has taken place outside, and often in opposition to, the various clerical groups. In this article, JUDD L. TELLER gives an account of these new religious tendencies and raises the question of whether Israeli Judaism is likely to develop into a radically new form of faith, limited in significance and appeal to the people of Israel, or, on the other hand, continue to preserve the historic universality of the Jewish faith. Mr. Teller is a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY and other American and Israeli periodicals. His most recent appearance in these pages was with his "Travels of Benjamin the Fund-Raiser" (April 1952).

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that shone so brightly beyond the ghetto's walls, has, after emancipation placed them in the dead center of its whirlwind convulsions, quite lost its allure. They have awakened to the simple, direct, undialectical humanism of the ancient Jewish tradition.

This feeling is so widespread that sabras who never used to bother their heads about religion are, here and there, showing an interest. The editor of a socialist youth magazine that carried a Streicher-like cartoon ridiculing the Religious Bloc was obliged, in a subsequent issue, to pacify his readers; his intent, he explained, had not been to mock religion itself, but only those who used it as a cover for their political designs.

An engineering student, a professed rationalist, asked me one evening whether it was true that rationalism was "under attack" in America. Some articles in *Look* on the major faiths, and references to God in the campaign speeches of Stevenson and Eisenhower, had aroused his suspicions.

He was a shy young fellow, slow of movement and deliberate of speech. Though a true sabra, he had the face of an East European peasant's son who had climbed into the intelligentsia. "There is a revolt against rationalism here too," he said; "I don't mean any greater willingness to accept the restrictions of the Orthodox—one of these days we'll get rid of all that. But there was Ben Gurion's recent visit to the Chazon Ish, the rabbinical mystic of B'nai Brak. The practical object of the visit was to get the rabbi to go along with the recruitment of women for national service; but deep down it was also an unmistakable indication of BG's own fascination with religion. And then there is talk of a tendency among the humanities' students at the Hebrew University to dabble in religious philosophy. There are no such goings-on at the Technion, of course. We engineers only believe what we see!"

A few days later I ran into a Hebrew University student. We picked up where the engineering student had left off. "The Orthodox politicians make our life miserable," he said. "They make the cafés close on Friday night, the movies on Saturday, and stop the interurban buses from running. But one mustn't confuse religion in its pure meaning with the legalistic rigors of Orthodoxy. All great civilizations are based on religious faith. Western civilization is Christian; Rome is Catholic; America is Protestant. Gandhi's mind was steeped in Indian religious philosophy. Even the dissolute Arab students of the Levant, cynical as they are, speak the truth when they protest their reverence for the Koran. Only Israeli society tries to make do with the thin rationalism of Voltaire. For a brief feverish moment Zionism served as a kind of substitute faith. But the Basle Program is hardly a *Weltanschauung*, and besides, it has already been realized."

You find a lot of this sort of thing in the Israeli magazines. The ingathering of the exiles, some writers maintain, is only made possible by the "Shema Yisrael," the traditional affirmation of the One God of Judaism; it is this alone that really joins together the motley crowd now rubbing shoulders in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa. Their tie is their religious culture; whereas their secular culture ties them to their differing pasts and separates them. The German professors at the Hebrew University are still strictly Hegel and Kant men. The kibbutz *vatikim* continue to mix Russian in their speech; sitting in front of their houses in the evening they hum the songs of Pushkin and Lermontov. The sabra is a worshipper of American know-how, has his collection of pin-up girls, and whistles Hit Parade tunes. To survive morally, this new people must fashion a culture of its own; but this can hardly be fashioned from Israeli secular culture, so obviously a wardrobe of borrowed clothes, ill-fitting and clashing in color and style. The basis of any distinctive culture must inevitably be the common tradition of Judaism. Such is the argument of the neo-religionists.

MANY Israelis ridicule this pessimism about present-day Israel and anxious searching for a faith and culture. All judg-

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ment is premature, these optimists declare; only give the Israelis time and a coherent and vital culture will emerge out of the present discordant mixture that is Israel.

Maybe so, say the faith-seekers; but what sources will it draw on, and what are your reasons for feeling confident about its future?

Take the army, say the optimists; see what it does for the immigrants. Most of them join up speaking a babel of tongues. They lack all manners, know no skills, and balk at discipline. Then look at them when they are discharged; they speak Hebrew, have learned a number of skills, and behave in a civilized way.

This is all very true, say the neo-religionists; but do basic Hebrew, vocational training, and barrack discipline make a culture and a morality? Moreover, the army too often mixes into things that are none of its business. Herzl's remains were given a military burial. All right, it wasn't to our taste, but he might have liked it—he always had a flair for the theatrical. But it was laying it on pretty thick to parade troops and have army chaplains officiate at the funeral of Chaim Weizmann, that most unmilitary of Jews. Is a brass band to become the symbol of Israel's culture?

The neo-religionists argue that existing secular Jewish culture is inevitably of a transitory kind. Secularism was a reaction against the restrictions of ghetto life; seeking emancipation, it broke with the traditional and essentially religious Jewish culture that had grown up in the ghetto. But anything that negates tradition so radically cannot long survive. Not that they advocate rule by the rabbinate, merger of synagogue and state, replacement of civil courts by Batai Din, etc. But they are convinced that Israeli life needs an underlying religiosity. Presidential funerals can't substitute for the solemnity of Yom Kippur, Army Day is no equivalent for Simchat Torah, and a political rally is not the same thing as a religious service.

But what exactly would this return to religious tradition imply? Certainly it would require some form of ceremonial expression. But how could the non-believers in Israel participate in such ceremonies? Would they have to become observers of the *mitzvot* on pain of being excluded from the Israeli spiritual community? The Reconstructionists in America have also wrestled with this dilemma.

MANY Israeli intellectuals have fortunately discovered that their break with ancestral tradition was less drastic than they had supposed; much of their freethinking, indeed, had only been a way of defying parental authority. But do they mistake their nostalgia for the parental hearth, which happened to be religious through and through, for a rebirth of religious faith? Would restoring the milieu restore the religion? In any case, we have such thinking as that of Eliezer Shteinman, essayist, novelist, and writer for *Davar*, the Mapai-controlled Histadrut newspaper, who recently proposed, half in jest, half in earnest, that a League to Combat Anti-Semitism be established in Israel to check what he regards as mounting contempt for Jewish tradition. Shteinman wrote: "They [the younger generation] turn up their noses at everything that bears a Jewish label: Jewish prayer, Jewish customs, the Jewish Sabbath, Jewish charm, quotations from Yiddish literature, Jewish clothes."

"Jewish clothes" is revealing. Shteinman's real concern is not with religion itself, but with East European customs which happened to be based on religion. He is not the first man nor the last to talk about religion and mean *folk-kultur*. This may also explain why the Mapai daily, *Davar*, and the fortnightly, *Beterem*, which is edited by a Mapai Knesset member, Eliezer Liebenstein, have virtually become the forum of the neo-religionists, for the memories and sentiments of the Mapai people go back to Eastern Europe. It may also explain why *Haaretz*, the middle-of-the-road daily, is staffed by a number of sabras who at one time or another were associated, however vaguely, with the "Canaanites," a small

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group of neo-pagans who would apparently like to revive the cult of Astarte as it was practiced in Canaan before the coming of the Hebrews. The Canaanites want Israel to cut herself off from Diaspora culture, international Jewry, and all religious tradition; they regard the Jewish immigrants as "foreigners" whose manpower the country happens to need. Now Gershon Schocken, the publisher and editor of *Haaretz,* is of course no upholder of such views. But he is German-born and may feel that *Haaretz* has to counterbalance Mapai's "leanings" toward East European *folk-kultur.*

LAST summer seemed to mark a turn in the tide, which was till then running strongly against religion, in no small part because of the high-handed behavior of the Religious Bloc. Anti-religious feeling reached its climax during a gasoline shortage, when the late D. Z. Pinkhas, Minister of Communications, decreed the suspension two days out of the week of all cab and bus service, and required drivers to observe the Sabbath as one of their two days of rest. Feeling ran high against these restrictions and editorials protested vociferously against the high and mighty conduct of the Orthodox official. Then terrorists, still unapprehended, set off a bomb in Pinkhas's home. Indignation was universal. Setting off a bomb was no way to answer the Religious Bloc, everyone said. The neo-religionists, seizing the occasion, pointed out that terrorism thrives where there is no respect for tradition. A group of eight intellectuals,* constituting a cross-section of Israel's intellectual elite, published a proclamation that said, among other things:

> Israel and its people are now passing through two serious crises. One is economic, the other spiritual. Every effort has been made to check the economic threat, with experts being called into the country and the people having to submit to all sorts of restraints. It is our misfortune that we have done nothing to restore the spiritual balance.
>
> The fortress of Jewish culture and tradition has been breached. Now that Jewry has accomplished part of its mission and the sovereignty of our state is restored, it is heartbreaking to see the alarming increase in the numbers of those who spurn and repudiate our people's spiritual treasures, a harvest of centuries, sanctified by martyrs' blood. . . . An appalling example of their disregard of an ancient culture is their repeated violations of the Sabbath, their deliberate conspiring to empty it of all Jewish meaning and make it serve dubious ends.
>
> We, the undersigned, pledge our best efforts to restore our people's spiritual health. As a first step, we have organized a circle of writers, newspapermen, and scientists, to be called "Dignifiers of the Sabbath." . . .

Nothing more has since been heard of the "Dignifiers of the Sabbath," although scores of intellectuals share their concern. Many people thought it utter nonsense, mere *batlanut,* to form a special circle; it confused the larger issue of religious tradition in general with the relatively secondary issue of Sabbath observance; and anyhow under the best of circumstances there could be no easy agreement on exactly what things Sabbath observance took in.

MANY writing on religion have traced the roots of the crisis to the rabbinate, and none more boldly and bluntly than Yeshayahu Leibowitz, lecturer in organic chemistry and a colorful Israeli intellectual who leads the religious workers' faction in the Histadrut. The East European Jew had no great difficulty in observing the Sabbath in the relatively simple society of the *shtetl,* Leibowitz writes. He had no responsibility for maintaining essential public services, and

*They were: Jacob Fichman (Mapai), grand old man of Hebrew letters, and staff writer for *Davar*; Shimshon Meltzer (Mapai), editor of Histadrut's illustrated weekly, *Davar Hashavua*; S. H. Bergman, professor of philosophy at the Hebrew University; Abraham Kareev (Mapai), editor of Histadrut's book publishing house; Simcha Assaf (Mizrachi), professor of Gaonic literature at the Hebrew University and a justice of Israel's Supreme Court; Dr. Abraham J. Braver (Mizrachi), Israel's leading geographer; Dr. Fischl Shneiurson, psychiatrist, novelist, and scion of the Lubavitcher Hasidic dynasty; Reb Binyamin, essayist and co-founder with Judah L. Magnes of Ichud, the organization seeking Arab-Jewish reconciliation.

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the few essential chores his household required on the Sabbath—lighting the lamps, firing the stove, etc.—were attended to by a *shabbos goy*. Should Israel now hire a crew of *shabbos goyim* to keep the public services going on Sabbaths and holidays, Leibowitz asks?

The rabbinate has neither suggested halting essential public services nor forbidden the Orthodox to take advantage of such services. An Orthodox Jew may not work at the water pumping station on the Sabbath; but he is allowed to draw water from the tap, though the rabbinate is well aware that someone is working to bring water to the tap.

It is up to the rabbinate, writes Leibowitz, to provide clear doctrinal guidance. It must take one of two positions, but whichever position it upholds it must do so forthrightly:

1. It can consider the requirements of the Sabbath to be limited by the requirements of the commonweal; no Jew could therefore claim exemption from the performance of essential work on religious grounds. This is the "progressive" position.

2. It can consider the sanctity of the Sabbath inviolable, whatever the contingency; whoever benefits from the Sabbath violations of another Jew is to be regarded as having violated the Sabbath himself.

But instead, Leibowitz writes, the rabbinate has adopted a double standard, forbidding certain labors on the Sabbath, yet allowing the pious to benefit from those labors. This "has alienated many of the young people among the Orthodox"; "it has degraded the Sabbath and abased Judaism," persuading many that "there is neither moral nor political reason for heeding the Sabbath, that, indeed, Orthodoxy itself regards the Sabbath as its own private matter and of no concern to the rest of Israel."

Leibowitz disclosed the formation several years ago of an unofficial Orthodox committee to consider these problems: it recommended that the rabbinate sanction the performance of a limited number of essential public services on the Sabbath. The rabbinate received the committee's recommendations, took fright, and shelved them precipitately—it was safer to behave as if no such problems existed. The rabbinate behaves in the selfsame way whenever pious Jews who find themselves in a difficult position write for guidance, so he asserts.

HERE and there an individual rabbi has met the obligation instead of shirking it. There was the case of a wireless operator helping to maintain round-the-clock communications with the outside world for a vital government department; he requested rabbinical dispensation for his Sabbath stint. One elderly rabbi was courageous enough to offer him a dispensation on certain rather odd conditions: he was advised to reverse his usual procedures, tapping out messages with his left hand instead of his week-day right, and transcribing them with Latin letters instead of the usual Hebrew.

Leibowitz cites another case. Count Folke Bernadotte was slain by terrorists late on a Friday afternoon. The Foreign Office and the police were galvanized into action. All through the night and the following day messages were dispatched to the UN, Israel's embassies, and the foreign ministries of many countries; house searches were made and suspects rounded up, fingerprinted, and interrogated. It was a grave emergency for the new state: no one could tell what the diplomatic repercussions might be, the extent of the conspiracy, or even whether it was aimed at the government itself. But when every man was needed, some personnel were absent—for religious reasons.

Christian Science is consistent when it forbids its followers to practice medicine or to benefit from such practice. If the rabbinate finds that the amenities of modern life are inconsistent with the Torah, it should declare any enjoyment of these amenities a violation of the *din*. This might very well reduce the number of the Orthodox, but it would certainly enhance the moral prestige of the rabbinate. In closing, Leibowitz admonishes the rabbinate with this quotation from the Rambam: "If [the Beth Din] deem it necessary temporarily to suspend prohibi-

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tions as a means of returning many to their faith, or of preventing them from violating their faith, then shall [the Beth Din] heed the necessities of the times."

JOSHUA BRAND implied in an article that the rabbinate was lacking in learning, courage, compassion, and *ahavat yisrael* (love of the people), else it would not be so consistently evasive, so deliberately oblivious to the dilemma of the observant Jew in modern society. "There have been rabbis . . . possessed of great generosity of heart," he writes, "who, feeling the anguish of their brethren, sought to reconcile the severe demands of the Law with the harsh circumstances in which their petitioners found themselves. There may still be such rabbis among us, but alas! their number is small and the difficulties grow apace. Courage is required, and realism."

Brand himself shows considerable *ahavat yisrael* in the concluding passages of his article. The rabbinate is not to blame, he writes; the body of religious law, embracing the Torah, the Talmud, and the commentaries of exegetes throughout the centuries, is too vast to be mastered by any one person seeking to formulate basic reforms. What we need is greater specialization. Rabbis at the outset of their careers should specialize in the various branches of religious law: *kashrut,* hygiene, personal law, social law. It would be easier for a specialist to cut through the accumulation of law and interpretation of law and arrive at clear conclusions.

Some religionists are completely out of patience with Orthodoxy; it is hopeless, they believe, to imagine that it can ever readjust to contemporary living. Writing in the socialist *Beterem,* J. L. Benor declared that many religious people in Israel have been alienated from their faith for want of a progressive alternative to Orthodoxy. He proposed the immediate setting up of a new Jewish denomination. Without such an alternative, said Benor, the Orthodox rabbinate would grow more and more domineering until the people of Israel would lose all interest in religion, or even oppose it actively. He recognized the serious political and social repercussions that might follow such a step: the rabbinate could proclaim a *cherem* against all social and business intercourse with adherents of the new denomination, forbid intermarriage of the progressive and the Orthodox, and excommunicate their offspring. But they couldn't maintain such a recalcitrant attitude for long. Don't Orthodox, Reform, and Conservative Jews intermarry in the United States?

When Benor gets down to cases, it is evident that what he is proposing is, at bottom, a revision of the synagogal ritual and the elimination of some prescriptions. In the United States, the Conservative synagogues carried through such a revision, and it has even been adopted by many Orthodox synagogues. But Benor proposes that this be done outside of organized Orthodoxy. Leibowitz, Brand, and people who think like them urge a more fundamental revolution. They call for a revision not only of the synagogal ritual, but also of the Halachah itself—for a bold reinterpretation of the whole body of Jewish oral law, but *within* the framework of Orthodoxy.

In all this debate there is almost no mention of Reform Judaism. The reasons are simple. Israel's intellectuals, in the majority, are of East European origin. The only religion they know is Orthodoxy; in seeking to rejuvenate Judaism it is natural that they should think only of a rejuvenated Orthodoxy. But more important, perhaps, is the fact that Reform Judaism was a way of adaptation to the non-Jewish environment of the Galut, whereas Orthodoxy was a way of isolating and preserving Judaism from the influences of the alien milieu. However irked the average Zionist intellectual is by Orthodox authoritarianism, he is nonetheless convinced that Orthodoxy, just because of its rigid separatism, was able to preserve the Jewish community intact against the day that it reestablished its own state in Palestine. But the Religious Bloc parties call for "Torah rule" in Israel without defining what they mean by Torah rule, Yeshayahu Leibo-

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witz points out; and unless the Torah is adapted to the needs of a modern society, such "rule" is impossible.

THE rabbinate was outraged last summer by a pamphlet that appeared on the eve of a bitterly contested election of delegates to a convention of Hapoel Hamizrachi, the religious labor party. This pamphlet bore the imprint of Le'Mifneh, at the time Hapoel Hamizrachi's strongest wing. Le'Mifneh draws its support from the religious collective settlements and has advocated Hapoel Hamizrachi's joining Histadrut and severing its alliance with the middle-class religious parties, Mizrachi and Agudas Israel.

The authors of the pamphlet—Moshe Oona, a member of the Knesset, and Meir Or, a member of a collective settlement—outlined what was in effect a state religion (somewhat obscuring their purpose, however, behind assurances that they were seeking to persuade and not impose). Orthodoxy, as it happened, overlooked the veiled primary purpose of the pamphlet, reacting violently to the criticism of the rabbinate which it contained. Unaffiliated young Orthodox were urged to join Hapoel Hamizrachi at once in order to vote in its election and defeat the Le'Mifneh faction. Such in fact happened, despite frantic last-minute efforts by Le'Mifneh to disassociate itself from the pamphlet.

In the pamphlet Oona advised the Orthodox to stop pressing for Torah rule, and to concentrate their efforts instead on "reducing the area of conflict between tradition and the state, and on *devising solutions, based on Halachah, for the problems arising out of the needs of the state:*

"To struggle for Torah rule, to try to impose Torah laws as they now stand, is unrealistic and Quixotic. . . . The Torah doesn't even have laws for many important areas of political life, and there has so far been no effort to formulate a modern law based on the principles of traditional law. . . .

"The religious must not expect to make any lasting progress by resorting to pressures, threats, and defiances of the non-religious public." Once the non-religious are confirmed in a hostile attitude, Oona contends, "the religious will find it impossible to convince them of the legitimacy of their demands. . . ."

Oona, like Leibowitz, warns that the religious must not seek "special rights and remissions"; this would restrict the rule of the Torah to the Orthodox alone and would "result in the state's developing on principles unrelated to tradition and even opposed to it."

Meir Or, co-author of the pamphlet, in a running commentary on Oona's text goes far beyond anything proposed by his colleague, though you have to read him twice to realize this. "It is our view," Or writes, "that the establishment of the Jewish state marks a decisive juncture in Israel's history and affects the very basis of all Jewish life as we have hitherto known it. As the destruction of the Second Temple [in its time] forced us to reassess our religious problems, so [now] the establishment of the state requires us to make such a reassessment. We must skip over the whole period of the Galut and the Galut Halachah, going back to a time preceding the Halachah's canonization, so as to direct the Halachah's development toward new horizons. This is a job we've got to do even if it seems to go against the accepted and traditional. . . .

"The official religious institutions oppose this tendency, we know. Yet we are convinced that their attitude, if maintained, would only result in a perpetuation of the Galut—even within the State of Israel. Their aim is not a continually evolving Halachah; what they aim at is the perpetuation of Galut Halachah. . . ."

Oona, Leibowitz, Brand, and others propose a variety of revisions and reforms of the existing tradition. Or, on the other hand, suggest, if need be, the complete jettisoning of the two-thousand-year-old heritage of Jewish philosophy and customs, replacing it by a new, Torah-based theology, custom-made for Israel.

Oona and the others follow in the "revisionist" line of the Baal Shem Tov and

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the Maskilim; like the Reform Jews, Reconstructionists, and certain young Orthodox rabbis in the United States, they hope to work out an applied religion whose customs and practices would be observed even by the most secular Jew. Their struggle is to preserve the Jew's religious separateness without thereby surrendering his claim to full participation in the life of modern society.

THUS, by one path or another, the religionist in Israel aims to preserve, through the agency of an enlightened religion, some of the moral-cultural assets which marked Jews as a people, and which might be dissipated in a thoroughly secularized and inevitably (at least for decades to come) provincial Israel. Non-Orthodox Benor and Orthodox Oona both share this concern to preserve the best of Galut tradition. Or, however, seems almost delighted to reject the Galut heritage. This would seem to place him, in effect, not among the neo-religionists, but among such extreme secularists as the Canaanites. The latter also call for a complete breaking with the Galut past. They regard themselves as a restored pre-Hebraic people, taking up their life where it had been interrupted by the Hebrew invasion of Canaan. Thus even chronologically there is the basis for a compromise between the Caananites and Or: the latter wants to go back to "a time preceding the canonization of the Halachah"; the former also want to go back, only farther back.

Of course, the Canaanites explicitly preach severance from the worldwide Jewish community. Or seems unaware that this is what his position really implies. If he is right in thinking that the Galut Halachah cannot serve the needs of a state-based people, then how can the state-based Halachah he envisages suit the needs of the Jews of the Diaspora? What Or's proposals imply is a catastrophic rupture between Israel and world Jewry.

The danger of such a rupture has long been evident to many people; the Israeli press and Jewish publications abroad have discussed it often. But it hasn't been generally realized that this rupture threatens to extend to Judaism as well.

THE real religious issue, then, is not to be found in the set-tos between Ben Gurion and the Religious Bloc, the scramble for cabinet seats, or the battles over the impositions of the rabbinate. The issue is, quite simply, whether Israel can survive morally and culturally as a purely secular society; or must it seek a basis for itself in religious tradition? A large body of opinion in Israel would seem to think that Israel needs the support of a religious culture to survive. The next question that arises is whether these traditions are to be enforced by law, or must they gain acceptance, so to speak, on their own? Soon after that, the crucial question comes into sight—already it is more than foreshadowed in current debate: will religion in Israel develop in the direction of a Judaism having significance for Israel alone, as Or would seem to wish, or will it preserve the universality of Judaism and the Jewish people the world over? In other words, will Israel's revival of Judaism, felt to be a common bond among all Jews, renew and strengthen that bond, or will it be the means to weaken it further? Or will it be necessary, as some think, to all but shatter it as it presently exists, in order to forge it anew?

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GERMANY, CENTER OF THE "PEACE OFFENSIVE"

Is an East-West Settlement Possible?

GEORGE LICHTHEIM

NOTHING illustrates better the prevailing temper of Europe this spring than the fact that conservatism has once more become the dominant mood of electorates and governments. In Britain, the coronation serves to underline a yearning for stability which is the emotional counterpart of the Conservative government's astonishing rise in popularity since it took office eighteen months ago. In France, Gaullism has suffered eclipse in the municipal elections and its former adherents have largely rallied to that symbol of pre-war bourgeois respectability, M. Pinay. In this atmosphere it somehow seems fitting that President Eisenhower should turn out to be a good deal less forceful as a national leader than had been hoped—or feared. After all, with Stalin gone, there appears little occasion for him to display those unduly aggressive qualities which Europeans had been warning themselves would be forthcoming from the White House once he was installed there.

None of this represents a genuine stabilization comparable even to the false dawn of the Locarno period after the First World War. NATO remains as essential as before to the physical security of Western Europe, and Europe's economics remain as shaky as ever. With a slight American recession on the horizon, the dollar gap has once more begun to seem an immediate problem rather than a permanent affliction. The downward trend of sterling area raw-material prices since the opening of the "peace offensive" promises another repetition of the bi-annual British dollar deficit which some economists are now beginning to regard as an inherent feature of Britain's postwar struggle for survival. In France, the Indo-Chinese hemorrhage and a budget deficit totaling one-fifth of the 1953 record appropriations already voted by parliament, combine to raise all the old issues in an aggravated form: no hope of genuine financial stability without a constitutional reform which the voters in the municipal elections have just by implication rejected. As for Italy, no amount of political tightrope walking can conceal the fact that none of the country's basic problems has been tackled under a regime fully occupied by the urgent problem of keeping alive and saving the fragile parliamentary institutions.

THE change in atmosphere, therefore, is merely psychological. It is nonetheless real and important, both as a contributory factor in promoting the Soviet "peace offensive" and as an echo of its recent manifestations. Europe wants the cold war to end, or at least to become innocuous, and will bitterly resent any attempt to aggravate it, whether the initiative comes from Moscow or Washington. There is already, in responsible quarters, a groundswell of dislike for Mr. Dulles which goes some way to offset

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WITH the Russian "peace offensive" in full swing, sowing the usual mixed crop of hope, skepticism, and confusion, GEORGE LICHTHEIM here surveys the international scene with a view to the possibilities of an East-West settlement of at least some of the chief issues of the cold war. Mr. Lichtheim outlines the factors that make a genuine settlement very difficult for both parties: he indicates why a totalitarian regime such as the Soviet Union cannot easily retreat without endangering the stability of the entire imperialist structure it has erected; and why, in his opinion, the West cannot afford an arrangement that might "disarm Europe morally without disarming Russia materially." Mr. Lichtheim, who hangs his hat in London, is a regular writer for COMMENTARY; in April he contributed "The Cold War Perspective Without Stalin."

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the ingrained detestation of M. Molotov. A multitude of small straws in the wind—the reaction to American stiffness at Panmunjom or Tokyo, the jubilation of the popular press over the smallest courtesies shown by the Russians, the sudden resurgence of anti-Germanism in various quarters—indicate a revival of the mood dominant in the immediate postwar period. Aberrational American imbecilities such as the McCarthy "investigation" of information libraries, or the insolent treatment of visiting European celebrities under the provisions of the Immigration Act, are given a degree of prominence, and arouse a volume of anger and ridicule, suggestive of a growing belief that peace has come at last and normal everyday sentiments can once more be voiced without inhibition.

This feeling is no longer confined to the left. There is no more staunchly Conservative paper than the *Financial Times*, London's counterpart of the *Wall Street Journal*. Yet the full-blooded John Bullish abuse poured by its columnist on Republican high tariff moguls, Washington bureaucrats who obstruct British exports to America, and Senators McCarran and McCarthy, make the *New Statesman's* carping sound like polite drawing-room twaddle. The Tories who banked on Eisenhower feel betrayed by the administration's weakness vis-à-vis Congress, and take it out on the Republicans, but with an undertone of resentment against the United States in general. In the most exalted quarters, a growing apprehension that the administration is not in earnest about tariff reductions has lent wings to the campaign to make Britain less dependent on dollar earnings (and therefore more dependent on expensive home-grown food in place of American and Canadian imports). And all over the Continent the argument is once more heard that trade relations with Russia and her satellites *must* be expanded if Western Europe is to earn a living. In short, European conservatism, for the first time since the war, is acting on the assumption—hitherto confined to the left—that a greater degree of independence from the United States is both possible and desirable.

THE Soviet "peace offensive" takes its cue from this state of affairs and—also for the first time since the war—shows some tactical ability in exploiting it. Nothing perhaps serves better to debunk the myth of Stalin's political genius than the improvement in the techniques of Soviet diplomacy since his demise. One has only to compare the now famous *Pravda* editorial of April 25, answering President Eisenhower's speech, with the semi-lunatic screams which used to issue from that quarter not so long ago. No wonder the British press was full of guarded praise: "Every sentence in the enormously long *Pravda* leading article . . . deserves the closest study. The article as a whole presents the calmest, clearest, and most rational statement of Soviet policy that has appeared for many a long month" (*Times*, April 27). "There is much in all this that is by any standards reasonable and by Kremlin standards strikingly so" (*Economist*, May 2). This mood is echoed daily across the Channel, with individual variations running from nervous optimism in Paris to studied reticence in Bonn, but with a common note of hopefulness which has not been heard since the cold war began. Churchill's eagerness to visit Moscow and, it would seem, drink the Politbureau under the table and extract a peace treaty on the spot, only puts into characteristically colorful terms an attitude common in Western Europe at the moment. It is an attitude compounded of despair at the prospect of an endlessly prolonged war of nerves, impatience with "liberation" talk in Washington, and genuine belief that the Kremlin may be ready for a settlement. And it naturally centers on the unspoken assumption that a tolerable settlement in Central Europe will leave America and Russia face to face in the Far East: which is more or less what every European is praying for.

The British and West European demand for the formal recognition of Soviet China and its inclusion in the United Nations must be viewed against this background. It stems not from any illusions about the character of the Peking regime, but from a realistic assessment of the new world balance of power

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brought about by the Communist victory in China. That balance opposes the Continental bloc of Russia and China to the United States and its allies: Japan, Britain, and Western Europe. Europeans argue that if Washington wants to upset this alignment it should do so in Asia: by trying to separate China from Russia. But the first step to this goal must be formal recognition of Peking, i.e., an official admission that the Chinese revolution cannot be undone. For unless this step is taken, they believe, it is hopeless to expect Peking to become more independent of Moscow. The gradual encouragement of Chinese nationalism—dangerous though it is to China's immediate neighbors—is the only means of insuring that Peking shall have a foreign policy of its own. For this reason even friendly critics of President Eisenhower's statement of April 16 felt that he laid himself open to a damaging Russian counterstroke when he failed to include the recognition of the Chinese government among the steps America is willing to take.

Consequently, Peking's complicity in the Vietminh drive against Anglo-French interests in Southeast Asia has not caused any display of moral indignation in London and Paris. It is taken for granted that China will flout the Western Powers until they combine greater effectiveness in defending their interests with greater readiness to take the Chinese revolution as an accomplished fact, and treat China as one of the Big Five (or Big Six, if someone in Washington should have the imagination to propose the inclusion of India, or at least not to oppose it). Would this lead to "peace" in the Far East? Probably not: the best-informed people here believe that the Kremlin basically wants a standstill agreement in Europe so as to be able to concentrate on Asia. But at least it would enable the Western Powers to confront their antagonist without the handicap of having to defend what they consider an obsolete moral position, and without being obliged to wage a "crusade" against what is, to their mind, one form of Asian nationalism. What political and military conflicts may have to be fought out thereafter would at least be dehydrated of all ideological passion. The Kremlin scored a point in its reply to Eisenhower when it took up the cudgels on behalf of China, "the greatest country in the world." Reduce this issue to one of power politics, and half the propaganda battle is already won, for China is now and will remain a threat to its weaker neighbors. But before we can make use of this natural conflict of interests between China and her neighbors, there will have to be an end to the absurd pretense that Peking can be boycotted permanently. The long-term business of disrupting the Moscow-Peking axis may well occupy decades, but it might as well begin now.

II

In the Asian theater the Kremlin can turn the pressure on and off without direct involvement. In Europe, by contrast, its actions impinge directly upon the exposed Soviet glacis from Stettin to the Black Sea. By relaxing the cold war tensions Moscow may hope to give centrifugal pressures in the West full play, until the Atlantic community relapses into the state of semi-anarchy from which it was rescued by NATO. But any genuine relaxation must entail at least a partial sacrifice of the outlying Soviet bastions in Central Europe. Ideally the Kremlin may aim, and probably does aim, at no more than a standstill agreement, but it is unlikely that the Western Powers will be satisfied with anything short of a settlement which removes the Soviet occupation troops from Eastern Germany and Austria and enables the two severed halves of Germany to come together again: failing such an arrangement, the arms race will continue. If one assumes that a desire to reduce expenditure on armaments is the basic motivation behind the Kremlin's new attitude, it therefore seems reasonable to conclude that there is at least a chance of this kind of agreement, provided Washington foregoes the demand for wholesale "liberation" of the satellites, and provided both sides are willing to face the political risks of unifying Germany.

But the great problem is that it is not easy

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to evaluate those risks. What, for instance, is the significance of recent measures to convert East Germany's so-called police force into an army? The process has been going on for some years, and it seems to have gathered speed in recent months. Is this mere blackmail or does it portend a long-range plan to enter the unification talks only for the purpose of disrupting them at some stage and proclaiming East Germany a "sovereign independent People's Democracy"? The same uncertainty surrounds the Sovietization of industry and agriculture which started in real earnest two years ago and has been speeded up since last summer. Perhaps the simplest explanation is also the truest: namely that Moscow is following its traditional practice of keeping two different solutions available, depending on how the peace talks develop. Beyond this surmise only the foggiest guesswork is possible.

Not that there is much uncertainty about the facts. It is no secret, for instance, that East Germany now boasts the nucleus of a genuine army, though as yet one without a general staff. According to official British computations, disclosed by the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the House of Commons on April 23, there are at least 90,000 men in the ground forces, 6,000 in the air force, and 4,000 in the small naval force organized for coastal duties. This may seem a modest establishment, but there is evidence to show that expansion has been proceeding apace in recent months, notably in the air force, which now includes three fighter regiments equipped with Russian training aircraft. The ground forces are known to include one armored corps (two infantry and one armored division) and eighteen independent regiments, the whole equipped with 600 Russian tanks, 250 self-propelled guns, 1,700 other guns, and 4,000 vehicles. A skeleton force? Certainly, but one that can be rapidly expanded as soon as Army Group North (at Pasewalk, under Major-General Rentzsch), Army Group Center (at Erfurt or Dessau), and Army Group South (at or near Dresden), have their full complement of officers.

It is likewise no secret that the Soviet authorities have instructed the East German administration to build a strategic railway 200 miles long from the port of Rostock to the important railway junction of Halle: a railway whose sole purpose is to link the three Army Groups. Nor is there any mystery about the fact that the fourteen administrative districts, which have taken the place of the old East German *Laender,* have opened recruiting offices; that some 400,000 people are receiving elementary military training; that factory workers are encouraged to enroll as prospective "partisan fighters" against unnamed enemies; and that women and girls are urged to learn how to shoot.

All this *may* be an overture to peace talks leading to the unification, disarming, and neutralization of Germany; but it may also be the first step towards either a "Korean" solution of the German problem, or at least a "Czechoslovak" one. A unified Germany, that is to say, might find itself harboring the world's biggest fifth column, ready to take over as soon as all occupation troops—Western as well as Russian—have been withdrawn. This danger is discounted by Social-Democratic optimists, who feel convinced that the East German regime would be swept away without a trace if free elections were permitted in the Soviet zone; but it is taken seriously by most foreigners and some Germans. And even the Social Democrats admit that the young generation in the zone is being Stalinized through the official youth movement, and that given a few more years of this totalitarian pressure a substantial section of it will turn away from the West for good. There will then really be two German states, and two German nations.

On a long-range calculation, therefore, the Russians may well feel reasonably confident of their ability to turn Eastern Germany into a full-fledged Soviet satellite. Alternatively, they may permit its reabsorption in a united (and disarmed) Germany outside the European community, which would then harbor a Trojan Horse of menacing proportions. For one thing, they

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could look forward to the possibility of a subsequent Communist *coup* on the Prague model. They would also gain the paralyzing effect upon Western Europe of a newly resurgent "independent" Germany. The European Army project would of course be killed stone dead, France would retire into her shell, and parochial nationalism would revive all over Europe.

Serious politics in France and Germany today are concerned with the problem of harnessing the old forces of national energy to something larger than the nation: not only because the European nation-state is incapable of defending itself under modern conditions, but because genuine self-confidence cannot be generated under the economic and political conditions which the national framework imposes. This is true of Germany as well as of France, despite the Federal Republic's brittle economic prosperity. It accounts for the fact that European integration has become the only slogan which the young generation in Western Europe is prepared to treat seriously. All this would come to an end, or at least be seriously checked, if Germany were unified and neutralized, that is, expressly forbidden to enter the Atlantic Community.

III

THUS obstacles to the unification of Germany are much bigger than the Western public as yet suspects. Eight years of postwar history have brought about a division in the heart of Europe which will face the powers with unprecedented problems if they ever get down to the job. While the Federal Republic is virtually part and parcel of the Atlantic world, Eastern Germany has during these years—and particularly during the past two years—been turned into a "People's Democracy." Roughly 90 per cent of its industrial production is no longer in private hands. Some 85 per cent of the land has been split into farms of less than 50 acres, and these fragmented holdings in turn have since last summer been drawn into the maelstrom of collectivization. A year ago, the chairman of a group of German economists in Stuttgart who study East German problems, Dr. Paul Binder, remarked that collectivization would have to be swept away if Germany were to be reunited, but he also warned that "there has never been an agrarian revolution in history which has been successfully reversed." Since then, collectivization has been greatly speeded up, commerce has been further concentrated in the state *Handelszentrale,* Stakhanovite methods have been extended in industry, the managerial elite has obtained additional privileges at the expense of the mass of labor, and foreign trade with the West has all but disappeared.

Eastern Germany was once a component part of the German economy; it is so no longer. The Russian aim has been to turn it into the workshop of the Eastern bloc, and this aim has largely succeeded. Not only has production of pig iron, steel, cement, chemicals, and electric power increased above pre-war, at the expense of textiles and other consumer goods: the fact that the zone has become a great industrial producer has meant a reorientation of its trade. Before the war, the area traded four times as much with the rest of Germany as it did with foreign countries and its internal German trade was roughly balanced at four billion marks. Exports were about one billion. Today some two billion marks' worth of goods, or over 80 per cent of its "official" exports, go to countries of the Eastern bloc, while an estimated three billion marks' worth a year have been taken by the Russians as reparations. By contrast, East Germany's interzonal and "Western" trade is negligible.

It would be a heavy burden for the Federal Republic to take over Eastern Germany's foreign trade, unbacked as it is by gold or dollar reserves, or by any sort of credit or good will in the West. In addition, the Federal government would have to assume a staggering financial burden, for East German banks have neither reserves nor credit: they are mere issuing houses for worthless paper money whose only value is its negotiability within an autarchic Soviet bloc. The government would also have to find

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work for the 250,000 men now employed, at fantastic cost, in the uranium mines, which would have to be closed as they are utterly uneconomic; for another quarter million in industries set up for the exclusive benefit of the Eastern bloc; for the 100,000 members of the "Peoples Police" and the 50,000 employees of the state *Handelsorganisationen;* and for some hundreds of thousands of wage earners who would presumably return from exile in Western Germany. No wonder West German public opinion, for all its pious protestations, is in fact far from anxious to speed the day of unification.

WHAT makes the problem urgent is the agricultural breakdown which by the beginning of May threatened Eastern Germany with actual starvation—this in a former surplus area! Collectivization, the flight of independent farmers from the land, lack of machinery and sheer bad luck have produced a state of affairs where this spring the zone is short of 600,000 tons of bread grain, 125,000 tons of potatoes, and 100,000 tons of sugar, until the next harvest becomes available. The famine in potatoes—once the staple food of the people—has in recent months reached such proportions that restaurants serve boiled potatoes only to customers bringing an equivalent supply of raw potatoes. The stream of refugees now consists for the most part of people actually threatened by starvation: chiefly from among the two million businessmen, shopkeepers, and artisans whose ration cards were withdrawn at the beginning of May.

This collapse in farming and food distribution contrasts oddly with the parallel growth of heavy industry. Temporary famines are not regarded as a serious matter by the Russians, and to the extent that they break the resistance of the people to official policy they even have their part to play in the over-all plan. It is true that Eastern Germany is not yet completely shut off from the remainder of the world, a fact dramatically underlined by the Federal German government's appeal on May 4 to international relief organizations to send food into the zone. On a somewhat longer perspective there are now semi-official plans in Bonn for supplying the zone, *after* unification, with consumer goods, and for West German firms to "adopt" their East German counterparts in order to help finance production and marketing. But these schemes hinge on the willingness of the Russians and their German agents to permit elections and unification to take place at a moment when economic collapse threatens. Prima facie, this seems unlikely, though it is just conceivable that a real and permanent breakdown might induce the Kremlin to wash its hands of the whole region.

Even on the most optimistic assumption about Soviet intentions, there are serious economists who doubt whether a unified Germany can ever be made economically viable again, unless it is also allowed to join the Atlantic world: and this would run counter to the neutralization the Kremlin is expected to demand as the price of political unification. Thus it seems possible that if the Soviet government in the end agrees to unification, it will be mainly from a belief that a neutralized Germany must shortly become ripe for Communist penetration. The longer unification is delayed, the more certainly will Eastern Germany become a Soviet Republic. Doubtless the Pieck-Ulbricht regime would be swept away if genuine elections were held, but in the long run Germany might find herself sucked into the Soviet orbit, at least to an extent sufficient to eliminate all talk of making German divisions available for NATO. If this is the long-range Soviet aim, nothing has yet occurred to render it impossible.

IV

CHINA and Germany have been singled out in this discussion because they are in fact the two key areas in the world struggle. Whether the cold war comes to an end will depend on whether agreement can be reached on these two issues. By comparison, all others are unimportant, almost meaningless. It is not, for example, seriously expected in London that a Four Power conference,

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if one were held, would be asked to concern itself with such questions as the holding of elections in the remainder of Eastern Europe; or with Soviet propaganda in Asia. Whatever the settlement, these problems remain. It is appreciated that Washington cannot simply drop these issues, with Congress in its present mood; but it is not thought that President Eisenhower and Mr. Dulles will expect the British and French governments to take the same view of the international situation as that held by Republican members of the Senate.

There is, on the contrary, a distinct possibility that if the Kremlin is reasonably conciliatory, European sentiment will rally behind a demand for a settlement which would admit China (and some fourteen other candidates) into the United Nations, neutralize a unified Germany, and bury the European Army scheme. Europe is so willing to accept such a settlement that Whitehall was genuinely surprised when the *Pravda* editorial of April 25 failed to demand the immediate convocation of a Four Power meeting on Germany. Such a demand would have embarrassed Washington. That it was not at once put forward indicated a certain clumsiness, which in turn suggested that M. Molotov was still in effective control of foreign affairs. But matters may change in this respect, too; with Stalin out of the way, there is no saying how far the Kremlin may go in recovering some of the ground it lost in the immediate postwar period by its display of brutal arrogance. Already there is evidence that the "peace offensive" has made some impression in France, notably in quarters where the rearmament of Germany is thought intolerable. The French are probably right in believing that Germany would quickly dominate any West European organization which did not include Britain; but since they also refuse to let Bonn become a member of NATO, they seem to have effectively barred the way to an "Atlantic" solution of the German problem. What then remains if not the "neutralization" which Moscow is now dangling in front of Europe, and which is clearly intended to make European integration impossible? One may argue that a neutralized, but independent, Germany could subsequently be drawn into an "Atlantic" framework: but only after a lengthy intervening period of internal upheaval and the scrapping of all the present arrangements for making the Federal Republic an integral part of Western Europe. No wonder the Bonn government dreads this prospect. The more clear-headed French dread it, too, but there is still a residue of neutralist sentiment in France which, combined with Communist pressure, renders the country vulnerable to the more skillful diplomacy which Moscow has been practicing since Stalin's departure.

IF ANYTHING can spoil the Kremlin's scheme it is the very extent of the Soviet conquests since 1945. So deeply have the frontiers of the Soviet empire been thrust into Central Europe that any disengagement now must perforce create an impression of wholesale retreat under pressure. There must be times when the men in the Kremlin secretly wish that the Great Teacher of Mankind had not been quite so successful as an empire-builder. For consider the effect on Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia of a Soviet withdrawal from Eastern Germany and Austria; or the yet more startling effect on the Soviet public if the satellites should display signs of independence. Besides, a resurgent Germany would not be a comfortable neighbor. If the Western powers are running risks in encouraging or appearing to encourage the unification of Germany, so are the Russians. These risks, moreover, are of a kind to which military men must be peculiarly sensitive. We do not know what part the Soviet military hierarchy has played in the recent change of attitude in Moscow, but on the assumption that a kind of duel is going on between the new men in power and the more orthodox Stalinists of the older generation, it is reasonable to think that the military will tend to support the faction which takes a pessimistic view of Russia's security needs. Where did Stalin himself stand on this issue?

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Apparently he meant to have it both ways: he was determined to avoid a major clash with the United States, but willing to let the cold war go on. These aims were already becoming incompatible at the time of his death, and it seems possible that he would have taken the initiative to end the deadlock.

THE new regime is built around Malenkov, and who is Malenkov? Clémenceau once said of a colleague whom he disliked: "Imagine a piece of paper being pulled at the four corners; presently there will be a hole in the middle; that hole is Monsieur P." Is Malenkov more than the "hole" at the center of a political system pulled in different directions by the party, the state bureaucracy, the army, and the MGB-MVD (now once more included in one ministry under Beria's direction)? Can final control be exercised by a man who lacks the prestige of the revolutionary leader or the war leader: two archetypal figures among whom the remnants of Stalin's authority must ultimately be distributed? True, he has been built up (though not very insistently) as a benevolent figure, the dispenser of peace proposals, amnesties, lower prices for household goods, and stern rebukes for erring police officials. He may be relatively popular with the managerial class; it may even be true that he was not, in the recent past, actively associated with the more frightful aspects of Stalinism (though he was Stalin's right-hand man during the 1936-38 "purge"). But all that does not quite add up to the qualifications needed for the job of moderating the Stalinist system of rule by terror.

How genuine is the whole experiment in liberalization? There is some pertinence in the argument that the Malenkov government is the first grouping since the revolution to display something like a "Thermidorian" pattern, i.e., a tendency to execute a retreat from the reign of terror and to make things easier at least for the privileged stratum of Soviet society (the amnesty was largely designed to benefit minor culprits among the bureaucracy). It has broken precedent by rebuking the Secret Police for its use of "illegal methods" (but Yagoda, then NKVD chief, was executed in 1938, after having been made to "confess" that he had plotted to assassinate Gorky). Yet there are odd bits of evidence suggesting that internal rivalries—between the party and the Secret Police, even between the MGB and MVD branches of the latter—had more to do with the discomfiture of those responsible for the anti-Jewish campaign and the "doctors' plot," than any genuine desire to introduce the rule of law. There was, to be sure, the conspicuous case of Ignatiev's disgrace and dismissal from the post of Deputy Minister of State Security; but Ignatiev had also been appointed secretary to the Central Committee of the party on March 7 (i.e., after Stalin's death) and confirmed on March 20, a bare fortnight before his downfall. This was the first time the MGB had won a key position in the Central Committee's own secretariat. It marked the high point of its power, a power promoted by Stalin's maniacal distrust of all his associates. Is it altogether farfetched to suggest that Ignatiev was got rid of because the party leaders had decided to cut the Secret Police down to size, and not because they meant to alter the unholy methods of that organization? And is it at all conceivable that Malenkov can get rid of the Secret Police's predominance without letting the army in? After the Thermidor comes Bonaparte, as every Communist learns at school. How long can this unstable equilibrium last?

V

THESE questions are not altogether idle. They suggest grounds for doubting not merely the willingness of the Kremlin rulers to break away from the Stalinist pattern, but their ability to do so as well. On present evidence, the entire experiment in pacification and liberalization is being conducted within the institutional framework of Stalinism. While this state of affairs lasts there is little ground for optimism. Conversely, any genuine reform of the political structure is certain to enhance the army's prestige. And the army is not necessarily an improvement. The

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Chinese Communist revolution was carried out by political forces built around a military core; that may have contributed to greater internal stability, but it has not made Chinese Communism noticeably more peaceful than its Russian progenitor.

Can totalitarian regimes ever be reformed from within? Examples from Russian history are quoted, but the czardom was not fully totalitarian in the modern sense. Would a streamlined and modernized totalitarian government in Moscow be willing to restore that "one world," the disappearance of which Stalin described last October as the main result of the Second World War? There is no obvious answer, for we are in the presence of forces to which there is no genuine historical parallel. If any general principle can be invoked at all it is probably that which Marvell summed up in the closing lines of the poem he addressed to Cromwell:

The same arts that did gain
A pow'r, must it maintain.

That being so, it is questionable whether the Western World can afford to become party to a settlement which might disarm Europe morally without disarming Russia materially. Yet Europe urgently wants peace and a breathing spell. This dilemma is the background against which American and Anglo-French diplomacy are now executing an intricate series of dance steps.

The recent NATO Council meeting in Paris settled nothing. Its principal outcome was an American undertaking not to follow up Dulles's maladroit threats to make defense subsidies dependent on early ratification of the European Defense Community scheme; and an Anglo-French undertaking not to rush into a Four Power conference unless the Russians have previously given grounds for believing that they are in earnest about seeking peace. But the British government, much to Dulles's chagrin, refused to rule out the idea of Four Power talks altogether until the Kremlin has given way on some specific issue.

It remains the British contention that all questions can and must be settled around the conference table, and that Moscow cannot be expected to submit to preliminary tests of good faith. Churchill's determination to go down in history as the great peacemaker (and to win the next election on that slogan) is fully consistent on this point with Foreign Office tradition and national psychology. And in Paris the all but unbreakable parliamentary deadlock on the EDC treaty naturally encourages the government to hope that a Four Power conference leading to the neutralization of Germany will make it possible to drop the European Army scheme.

At the back of all minds there is the thought that if neutralization should break down, the whole of Germany can subsequently be included in NATO. That would give the Germans the national army they are supposed to be yearning for; it would relieve the British of the constant American and French pressure to join a federated Europe (in order to balance West Germany); and it would compensate French nationalism, reluctant to contemplate the merging of the French army in a federal structure, for the resurgence of a united Germany. Lastly, of course, it would make nonsense of the Kremlin's plans for keeping Germany disarmed and Europe defenseless. On this reckoning, the first essential is to get the Russians out of Eastern Germany, and to avoid all foolish talk of liberating the Western Slavs. All the rest, it is assumed, will follow in good time.

Is this a realistic calculation? The Kremlin has never yet relinquished anything peacefully, and the abandonment of Eastern Germany would be a big gamble. But there are those who believe that Malenkov is an "Asia Firster" and that under his direction Soviet policy in Europe will increasingly go over to the defensive. If they are right—and if Malenkov does not betray their hopes by allowing himself to be worsted in the domestic struggle for power—it is just conceivable that this year will witness a breathing space if not the end of the cold war in Europe: for how long, no one can say.

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ISRAELI PAINTING: AFTER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

A Report on Progress

WILLIAM SCHACK

TWENTY-FIVE years ago there were about fifty artists in Jewish Palestine, in a total population of 150,000. Of these fifty, discounting a few popular sentimental painters, two had already achieved distinctive work and perhaps ten others seemed to me to show promise of it. A decade later, in the Palestine Pavilion of the World's Fair held in New York, another dozen interesting painters were hung in an exhibition arranged by Elias Newman, an America-Palestine artist commuter, whose small book provided an informative catalogue for the show.

Today there are some 350 artists in Israel, in a population grown to 1,500,000. The ratio of artists has not fallen too much with the tidal wave of immigrants into the new state, and this is all the more remarkable considering the proportion of art-free "Oriental" immigrants in the postwar *Aliyah*. Whatever may be the ratio of significant artists to the tyros plus plodders, the important fact is that the number of such substantial artists has steadily increased. To show their work, there are galleries as well as museums in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Ain Harod (the largest of the communal farm settlements), which also have permanent collections of Western art.* The Tel Aviv Museum alone puts on some twenty to twenty-five exhibitions a year. In a recent one commemorating its twentieth anniversary, 199 artists (163 of them painters) showed 279 works, which were chosen by a jury from among 1,400 submitted.

WITHIN the past year we have had the chance to see a good deal of the art of Israel in this country. There have been no fewer than seven one-man shows in New York alone and several group shows in various cities. And at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, on June 14, to run until Labor Day, an exhibition opens of seven of the leading painters of Israel, sponsored by the American Fund for Israel Institutions, and selected by James S. Plaut, director of the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, where the show already ran in January under the sponsorship of the Fund. It went on to the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh before coming to New York; a further itinerary to other cities is planned. The artists included are Mordecai Ardon (Ardon-Bronstein), Moshe Castel, Nahum Gutmann, Marcel Janco (Jancu), Moshe Mokady, Reuven Rubin, and Joseph Zaritzky.

It is interesting to note that three of these were among the pioneer twelve of a quarter

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AMERICAN interest in Israeli painting has been stimulated recently by a succession of one-man shows by Israeli artists in New York, and now by a large group exhibition opening at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on June 14 after a tour of other cities. It is too soon to pronounce any total verdict on the quality of Israeli art, so WILLIAM SCHACK contents himself here with a description of the tendencies at work in it, as manifested in the Metropolitan show and elsewhere, and a provisional evaluation of the art of each painter represented. Mr. Schack, no stranger to these pages, lives in New York and has written on painting and sculpture in numerous magazines. He is the author of a life of Eilshemius, *He Sat Among the Ashes* (1939), and the editor of *Plastics Encyclopedia* (1950). His article "The Ordeal of Arnold Friedman, Painter," appeared in our January 1950 issue.

* The House for Art and Oriental Studies was opened last year at Kibbutz Hasorea, near Haifa, as a memorial to Wilfred Israel, who bequeathed the community his library and a collection consisting largely of Greek and Roman terra cottas, reliefs and small sculpture of Egypt, India, Siam, and China, examples of Etruscan and Persian art, etc.—more than 200 items in all.

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century ago, and three more of these pioneers might well have been included. Two have developed well, living in other countries; and, to make an end of statistics, the four others now at the Metropolitan were not in Palestine twenty-five years ago.

The problem Mr. Plaut faced is common to arrangers of national group exhibitions everywhere. By strict definition, a "representative" show would have to include a sample of the work of everyone who calls himself an artist. Even by ignoring four out of five artists in Israel a group show on this scale (75 works) would permit the inclusion of only one painting of each artist represented. Mr. Plaut felt that more could be learned about Israel's painting from an adequate display of the range of seven of its leading artists. With this stand one's only quarrel might be that they could all have been fairly represented by seven works each (the number shown varies from seven for Castel to fifteen for Zaritzky), which would have left room for three more artists.

Who would have thought thirty years ago that the day would come when someone would clap cap and gown on Reuven Rubin and call him dean of Israel's painters? Five years later the idea would not have been so fantastic, and one might then even have predicted imitators—one of whom recently also signed himself Rubin! The original Rubin has an important place in Israeli art not only because of his achievement but also because of his dynamic personal qualities, which, while employed primarily in his own behalf, also won attention for his fellow artists and perhaps even for the struggling country, too—it rewarded him by making him for a time Plenipotentiary Minister to Rumania. Rubin the breezy raconteur, telling for half an hour, and without redundancy, just how to cut slabs of *mamalige* with what kind of string, to delighted listeners who had not known until then that there was such a thing as Rumanian corn bread. Rubin the resourceful, persuading the government to allow him to clear the rubbish of centuries out of the Tower of David and whitewash the walls to make the first exhibition hall in Jerusalem—in which a Rubin one-man show was followed by a group show (1923) that was repeated there annually for the next six years; later persuading Sir Ronald Storrs, Governor of Jerusalem, when he vacated his charming house, to allow him to convert it into a gallery with monk's-cloth-covered walls—for another Rubin show; and staging, some years after that, still another at the unvacated home of the French consul. Rubin the tough-minded, arranging an exhibition in the heart of the hostile Arab world—in Cairo; the go-getter, first of his compatriots to spread his work to the art galleries of New York, Paris, London, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and many other cities; the salesman, of whose prowess both true and apocryphal tales are told. Yet all the while painting hard and to good purpose.

From the lowliest of academic beginnings, Rubin turned abruptly to the Swiss artist, Ferdinand Hodler, who had at one time as strong an appeal for many Continental artists as Cézanne, and for the same qualities of vigor and simplicity, though Cézanne's expression of them was far more painterly and original. But Rubin's temperament was not Hodler's and all the Swiss artist could do for him was induce the self-examination that led to "God-seekers," a sheaf of tormented woodcuts, and to a series of oils in which straining curves contend with elements of repose in the Palestine landscape. In Paris Rubin found his true masters—Matisse, Dufy, and Rousseau, and others—and assimilated their qualities in a blend of his own. A touch of the early Italians and the Byzantines (as in the wittily solemn groupings in "The Dancers at Meron") completed his equipment. At the Metropolitan those five pairs of flat black eyes look out at you from "Jerusalem Family" (1925) much as do the dark eyes of Matisse's "Lorette in a White Blouse" (*ca.* 1916); and Rubin's figures likewise are conceived primarily as design rather than as portrait, though he has the skill to produce resemblance when he wishes to. The paint is thin; the palette high; shad-

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ows are banished. As he overcomes the once formidable obstacles, and painting becomes a pleasure, he begins to be at peace with the world, and it is in a serene romantic spirit that he sees and sets down the primeval landscape, flora, fauna, and humans.

Gradually he departed from his flat style, thickening his paint and enlivening the brushwork, first in some detail, later on throughout the canvas. In "Flowers and Moonlight," for example, the nosegay was given greater paint density, while its enveloping leaves, sailboat and sea, mountains and moon, remained fairly flat. In the "Drummer of Meron," one of his finest early works, only the olive trees sloping upward in the middle distance were more animated in the brushwork. By the late 1930's, the whole canvas was handled three-dimensionally, as in "Sunflowers," "Field Flowers" (at the Metropolitan), and "In the Olive Grove" (in the recent show of Rubin's work at the Borgenicht Gallery in New York). Now the bare hills which confront a landscape painter everywhere in Israel are no longer sheets of paint but solid forms; the "Arab Flute-Player" (lent to the Met by the Museum of Modern Art) is richer in texture than a charming earlier (1938) double portrait of the Peretz Hirshbeins (at the Met under the title "The Poet and His Wife"). Otherwise the artist's general feeling for design does not change. His rhythmic patterns of landscape are of the same kind. In certain details he repeats a formula, as in the handling of clumps of cypresses in rather pretty decorative patterns and the fuzzy treatment of olive tree foliage. In more than one composition of hills he covers the nakedness of nature with an animated running line of olive trees, always painted in the same shorthand fashion.

For the last twenty years, Rubin has been cultivating much the same lyrical vein. While he does not have many surprises for us, neither does he have many weary repetitions; and that is saying much. The ebullience of spirit is still there to give his skill grace. He offers, too, in his ink and wash drawings continuing evidence of a knowing eye and sure hand, limning human figures, camels, goats, and donkeys with either a bold incisive line like Sesshu's or a delicate broken tracery which nevertheless firmly defines the subject within its decorative charm.

VERY different in spirit is the work of Mordecai Ardon, and indeed that of all the others in the Metropolitan show. Now in his middle fifties, Ardon was born in Poland and received his early training in Germany. At one extreme he studied with Max Dörner, a profound student of the techniques of the Old Masters, at the other with the Bauhaus and then in association with the Expressionists. In "Mount of Olives," a characteristic painting of fifteen years ago, which was hung at the Palestine Pavilion and again in his one-man show last year at the Passedoit Gallery in New York, both influences were reflected, though the resultant style was Ardon's own. There was a delicate use of chiaroscuro to break the monotony of the vast, well-knit panorama, while the modern influence appeared in the broad, bold brushstrokes which reduced most objects in the scene to masses of greater or less weight, prominent or receding—building blocks of pure color.

Since then, the older influence has been transformed into a refined use of deep color tones in place of black and near-black; the newer, in a more vivid gamut of color and a continued simplification of natural forms in which large areas of strong color are broken either by wisps of modifying color or by striations of the brushstroke itself. If it is difficult to see the wit and fantasy of Klee and Kandinsky except in an occasional item in Ardon's present work, there is still a link to the Blaue Reiter of pre-1914 Munich in the closely controlled disposition of bright color; his Expressionism is not a technique but an austerity of spirit reining in strong emotion. Technically, the tone is often Cubistic, but this may be accidental, derived from the very appearance of his subject matter rather than a conceptual handling of it: the walled cities, the shallow-domed cubes of the Arab peasant homes, everywhere the

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massed vertical emphasis of heavy stone structures and a sparing contrapuntal curve of the hills on which they stand.

For all their un-literal appearance, Ardon's paintings are firmly based on reality, and he strongly believes in the necessity of the Israeli artist's identifying himself with his own soil while making full use of a modern painting idiom. Only in this way, he feels, can an original and independent art arise in the country. His own practice—his own results—are the best justification of his belief.

As director of the Department of Art of the Ministry of Education, Ardon must have his difficulties. For one thing, he has a very limited budget. Two of the projects clearly indicated for his department are a permanent exhibition somewhere of the development of the country's art (the museums are inadequate in this respect) and a school of fine arts. The Bezalel, which has made good progress in teaching arts and crafts, originally also taught painting, but it was so far behind the times that the gifted had to run away to Paris to save their souls.

Witness Moshe Castel, who left at the age of eighteen to spend eight years there, and another year each in London and Italy to widen his outlook. (Last year he had a show at the Feigl Gallery in New York.) The Zak Gallery in Paris subsidized him for the last five years of his stay, and Castel still had no intention of returning to his native Palestine, where his ancestors had settled centuries before as refugees from the Spanish Inquisition; but the outbreak of World War II forced him to return there.

For all his prolonged schooling in the most fertile art center of our time, Castel did not at first reflect the late currents of French art in his work so much as a generalized French influence of the well-painted picture: a knowing use of paint as paint, a refined sense of space, a simplicity of composition. His personal quality was expressed in his choice of vivid reds and greens as his dominant harmony; with them he painted, for several years, quiet synagogue interiors, families gathered for traditional observances, and other such scenes of Sephardi life, but always in a painter's rather than an illustrator's way. Then an engaging note of playfulness and fantasy began to pry his painting motives loose from the too solid flesh, the too substantial walls. When Ha Ari receives the Sabbath (in a canvas of that title), he does so in unconfined, undefined space. This genial manner soon takes on a familiar aspect in a series of Biblical subjects: it is the idiom of Persian miniature painting, which suppresses perspective and is lighthandedly and lightheartedly decorative. But Castel gives the idiom both a modern accent and his own: the rich color is not flat and it is applied with a more supple brush than were the small jeweled patterns of clear color in the earlier work.

The unearthing of the 3rd-century synagogue at Dura, with its figured murals attributed to Persian artists, and to Greeks under Persian influence, had some part in this Eastward journey of Castel. Another archeological discovery carried him much further back in time: the mosaics in the synagogue of Beth Alpha representing the sacrifice of Isaac, with their primitive, continuous line drawings of figures, much like children's drawings. In a subsequent series of paintings based on the Song of Songs and other Biblical themes, such linear figures make their appearance. In one they are set off against a background of tiny areas of broken color; in another, figures outlined in black and red are planted in large plots of bright green and blue.

In some pictures Castel had used Hebrew letters as design elements. Now, in his most recent period, he has made them the central motives of his paintings. In illuminated manuscripts and in mosques, Moslem art had long ago made superb decorative use of Arabic scripts. Twenty-five years ago a rug factory in Jerusalem made a beginning with Hebrew letters. Some of Castel's calligraphy reminds one of Miró's, but the influence was not direct, perhaps only a stimulus to proceed in that direction. The Spaniard's calligraphic creatures are generally, perhaps always, a contraction of some real object;

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Castel's are strictly derived from the Hebrew alphabet. He elongates the letters, twists them, curves them out of close semblance to their textbook ancestors, eventually gives them the status of figures. Occasionally they vaguely limn some ceremonial object; the yellow bars in one canvas may suggest Sabbath candles; and indeed Castel's purpose is to achieve some symbolic sense of Jewish life above and beyond the visible elaborate decoration. Whether he succeeds in such communication must depend on the experience of the observer. But even as arrangements of line and color these canvases have a great deal to say.

Castel's apparently abrupt changes of style are not so unrelated as they seem at first sight. There is a period of preparation for them in the artist's own mind and temperament. As he has moved further and further from Paris, in time, his deep-seated Eastern qualities have asserted themselves in one form or another, as they no doubt will continue to in his next provocative period.

POSSIBLY the most vigorous painter in the group at the Metropolitan is Marcel Janco. An active participant in Dadaism, that antic protest against the state of art and literature and the world which erupted towards the middle of World War I, Janco did not belong to its nihilistic wing. He had already felt the discipline of Cubism, and Dadaism was to him more than a release from despair. It gave him the courage to experiment in new media such as plaster reinforced with burlap. Even in these early works off the beaten track he was keenly aware of color relations and form, so that when he returned to traditional painting based on representation it was as an artist who knows in his bones that how you paint is far more important than what you paint; and he had learned how. In a 1930 canvas like "Le Jardin du Luxembourg" at the Met, there is charm and solid painting in the playful movement of gray-white statuary with the sparse yellow-greens of lawn and the browns of three tree trunks, against the static gray-white buildings of the background. In Israel, where he has lived for more than a decade (he had first returned from France to his native Rumania), Janco faced his new and fascinating subject matter with equal painterly resolution. It has not made him literary but only more resourceful in his use of paint. At the same time, feeling so sure of himself in his medium, he has been able to communicate a good deal of the feeling of his subject.

In "Café at Ramleh" (1944), another of the pictures on view at the Metropolitan, he is concerned to create a harmony of browns, blues, and greens with contrasts in white. No Arab café (or any other) ever had such charm of color arrangement; it merely provided the suggestions and the artist paid it off with a "flattering" version of itself. Later Janco did several canvases derived from a panoramic view of Acre. There is the city, in intensified colors, in the background, and in the middle distance and foreground are superimposed formal designs based on sailboats and palm trees. The bright yellows, greens, blues, and reds are interspersed in the complex pattern with a sure hand; it is gay painting because it is such good painting.

Nor is it less good when the artist turns grave, as in "Nazareth" or "The Wounded Soldier" (the former is at the Met). In these and similar works he uses line not only to define the contour of a figure, but also crossing it arbitrarily, and loosened a bit from color. This is his idiom to portray the lost, the hurt souls, and it is effective. It is not the least of Janco's virtues that he approaches each new work freshly.

Moshe Mokady is clearly a man of sensibility, but, unlike Janco, he is not master enough of his medium to set down his vision altogether persuasively. In reproduction, oddly enough, he gives us an exciting anticipation of a Daumier-like quality, but the originals at the Metropolitan do not bear it out. The dramatic effect is there, but the painting is not dramatic because the drawing is not very expressive and the color lacks power. Mokady started as an Impressionist (in the original loose sense), and in a painting like "Goldfish" has used the method craftily

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in the variegated background. But this is so much darker than the fish and there are so few transitional tones that the subject is overdramatized. "Table and Painting" (1951), another of the artist's strikingly simplified compositions with strong contrasts, shows that he is at least not facile, and that he is always reaching for some new experience. If he can enrich his means, he can still become as interesting as he aims to be.

Two water-colorists, both of them of the pioneer group, round out the Metropolitan show. Nahum Gutmann, who also practiced sculpture, etching, and oil painting in his early years, has largely earned his living as a children's book illustrator, and his water colors are a superior type of illustration. The simplified compositions, the broad patterning, and the repetition of motifs belong to a painter telling a story easy to read but charming all the same because the medium is handled with a light touch. Sometimes the touch is not only light but fancy-free and the result is then richer than a story. It is all unpretentious work, as modest as the man.

Gutmann has painted soundly in oil, and some of his canvases might have been included, as are three oils by Joseph Zaritzky which are obviously the product of a man who has been married to water color all his life. At the very beginning of his career Zaritzky set down his little color washes in delicate harmonies; what he lacked was a sense of pictorial form. With the years he has gained increasing mastery of color and color relations, and in some measure a better grasp of composition. But he is still capable of seeking interest by drawing a vertical line down the very middle of a picture, cutting it in two. When, as in some of the works on view, he does achieve an over-all unity, it is entirely uncalculated and intuitive and very fine. When he is consciously abstract, as in his 1951 series based on Kibbutz Yechiam, he is not nearly so convincing or rewarding as in his 1939 Tel Aviv water colors. Here, the sketchy drawing and too scanty color sometimes make for what looks like a preliminary study, not a finished work. But it is in just such unfilled, untight lyrics that Zaritzky is often his most engaging. At the least he is an artist of beautiful passages; at his best, and within his own dimensions, a very pure stylist.

WHAT three others might have been included in this traveling exhibition? Even if we confined our choice to men over fifty, of the same generation as the seven, there would still be some difficulty. For along with their achievement, we would be tempted to consider also their role in the development of the country's art and perhaps their place in the community.

One choice likely to be unanimous, however, is Menahem Shemi (Schmidt was his original name, before the Hebraizing vogue set in). During his youthful training in Odessa, he was influenced by the dominant Russian realists, but he created his mature work chiefly under the joint influence of Utrillo and Cézanne. Shemi sought the richness of color and textural qualities of Utrillo combined with the structural strength of Cézanne. One of the most earnest of the early group of painters in the country, and working under adverse economic conditions, Shemi developed his own way doggedly, and when he died in 1951 at the age of fifty-five, he was, his fellow artists agree, at the height of his powers.

Arieh (Leo) Lubin, another of the pioneers, got his training at the Art Institute of Chicago, where he showed early promise. When I first met him he was fanatically scrupulous in his work, filling one sketchbook after another with skillful observations (especially of Arabs, whose language he spoke fluently), but only started a canvas occasionally and seldom thought it worth finishing. I am told that he is still, at fifty-six, rather doubtful about any of his pictures being really complete. There are two major strains in Lubin's work: like Shemi, he has looked to the organizational quality of Cézanne and a touch of Cubism; the other springs from the art of the Oriental miniaturists. Sometimes he imposes their bright colors on figures more strongly modeled than

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theirs, and in larger areas. A brilliant water color, "Holy Ark of the Safed Synagogue," happily synthesizes both strains: against a violet-blue arch and wall, the shrine is bodied forth in swirls of pale yellows, reds, blues, greens, and browns, all dominated by the red of its curtain modified with strokes of gold along the borders and in the Star of David. The whole structure is compact as brickwork yet airy with light and color.

BACK in the early days, Rubin's only serious rival, in some respects his superior, was Israel Paldi (Feldmann). Both men were dynamic, but Rubin, once he had stabilized his art as a serene lyrical expression, used his power in his daily living; Paldi, though no recluse, was of the breed that expend their most vital energy in their art. In Rubin's work, stillness; in Paldi's, stir. The walls of Jericho do come tumbling down in the staggered black and white gashes of his woodcut, which reveal, in other prints, the savagery of the ancestral conquerors of Hebron and the primeval quality of the landscape. In his oils there was movement even in the still life, a hidden irony in his portraits, violence controlled in stronger rhythms than pure decoration would warrant in a series of compositions of Arab boatmen at work in the reef-troubled waters of Jaffa Harbor. With their pure, bright colors applied in large, separated areas these became in effect murals of great carrying power. At the same time Paldi could do a pure line drawing of many figures brought into beautiful balance, with every stroke expressive.

After working ten years in Palestine, Paldi felt the necessity of refreshing his art at the Parisian springs (his early training had been in Germany). What happened was beyond his anticipation: the modern masters, as far back as Corot, not only impressed him; they overwhelmed him. Throwing overboard his past achievements, he started to paint all over again, humbly, a beginner. For all of a dozen years he floundered in dark muddy oils, losing the *élan* of his previous compositions as he sought a more refined command of the medium itself, beyond his real need. His associates, as he puts it, buried him without benefit of headstone. But he came to life, resurrected by Klee, children's paintings (he has been a teacher most of his life), and "the wonderfully worked surfaces of Japanese, Chinese, and Indian art." His canvases in a recent exhibition were described by one reviewer as Persian carpets in their colors and patterns—magic carpets. At the same time Paldi has been applying paint to forms built up in gesso, sand, pebbles, and the like, achieving simple, severe designs in low relief. I have only reproductions of these late phases to judge from, but even from them it is apparent that, for all the changes of content and style, they still have the strong, restive touch of the youthful Paldi. He says himself that he is fanatical in his aesthetic convictions and, though he is past sixty, *"il faut oser, oser, oser"*—that is: you have to keep on taking chances. I was not alone, these past years, in being unwilling to concede that Paldi had gone under; I wish we could have the evidence before us which shows that he has not.

A YOUNGER artist, Yehoshua Kovarsky, was presented at the Passedoit Gallery in March after one-man shows in the South and on the West Coast. In his early forties now, Kovarsky first studied at the Vilna Art Academy and later in the galleries of Paris, where he was especially drawn to Rouault. For his is an austere but robust spirit expressing itself vigorously without loose emotionalism or, in his sub-surface probings, morbidity. His palette is vivid in a medium tonal range which accords with the psychological quality of his approach to his subject. Sometimes he has frankly accepted the decorative possibilities of his theme—linearly in his forcefully drawn and designed "Kapparoth" (1943), or colorwise in the dense enamel-like pigment of the "Queen of Sheba" (1948). But the decorative value is never facile; it is restrained and subordinated to the design interest. Whatever the subject, however little or much he distorts it, design is always his overriding concern. Even when he conveys the feeling of a definite place, as

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in the pastels of several years ago based on his experience of Elath (characteristically, he rendered its sultry atmosphere not naturalistically by some intensification of sun yellows, but subjectively by a pervasive orange tone), the dominant value lies in their impeccable—but unslick—arrangement of forms in space.

In his recent oil, "Malinche," an interpretation of a Mexican legend, the figures of man, woman, and donkey are, without undue distortion, drawn as firmly into the design based on bold tilted verticals and horizontals as the abstract color bands at the right which serve as powerful vertical reinforcements. Those pale blue and red-brown bands, without being horizontal, impart a strong suggestion of sky and earth even in their "unnatural" position, just as the largest area, in pale yellow, suggests, without portraying, sunshine. Kovarsky's imaginative approach to a subject so alien to him as this, assimilating the story as painter, not as story-teller, gives us great expectations of his future achievement on his own ground.

Still a younger generation was introduced to us at the Feigl Gallery in New York in the drawings and oils of Yoram Kaniuk, better known as simply Yoram. Though clearly derived from Soutine and related artists, the canvases revealed a virtuoso command of the idiom and an ability to turn it to highly charged yet disciplined designs astonishingly unimitative for a young man of twenty-five. One hesitates to predict what so explosive a start will lead to, but it may be a good sign that, a few years ago, when Kaniuk already knew his own bent, he compelled himself to attend an academic school in Paris to get whatever values it had to give him. It certainly has not cramped his style; and if this is really his style he ought to go far.

OTHER contemporary tendencies are also represented in Israel, though none of the people working in those veins has as yet attained prominence. It would be surprising if Surrealism did not have its followers among men who had been hurled into Israel out of nightmare. More striking is the fact that comparatively few have ventured into the boldest of contemporary idioms—painting without the customary subject matter—or have stayed with it for very long.

It has been suggested that the cause lies outside the influence of art itself, and is psychological: that the artists, having pulled up their home roots, need, in a new and still troubled land, attachment to the objective reality, need literally to get their feet on the ground in order to overcome a feeling of rootlessness, before taking leave of it for an art which communicates purely in terms of abstract color, line, mass, and space. If some of the men I know who have been in the country for forty years and more still seek such identification with their soil, how much more strongly must the relative newcomers look to it.

This attitude is being assumed matter-of-factly by the artists developing under the recent tendency of the collective settlements to encourage art. Thus, Kibbutz Hameuhad, which is a federation of more than seventy such settlements, has some forty artists among its members (1950 population: 28,000), supplying them with materials, time off for their work, and the means for studying abroad (five were in Paris last year), and commissions for book illustrations, murals, and other communal activities. In 1952 Kibbutz Hameuhad ran what is said to be the first exhibition devoted entirely to the art of kibbutz artists at Kibbutz Na'an, near Rehovot. There were 350 items on display, and one reviewer spoke highly of the sculpture and drawings but "found little that was exciting in the painting division." Not a little of the work being done by kibbutz artists is at an unsophisticated didactic level, but some of them are aiming at a higher aesthetic goal. Yohanan Simon, of Gan Shmuel, who is considered the most talented of these, shows, in one phase, a semi-primitive point of view which seems apt for dealing with the rugged life about him. Yet he is also an admirer of the suave murals of the Mexican, Diego Rivera.

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THOSE who do not get around to exhibitions or who missed the ones referred to in this article will find a small but highly satisfactory sample of Israeli paintings in a recently published portfolio, *Israel Painters.**

This contains ten reproductions in full color beautifully done (in Switzerland), including excellent examples of Shemi, Castel, Mokady, Ardon, Janco, and Lubin (the "Holy Ark of the Safed Synagogue" mentioned above), together with less interesting but also well-reproduced works by Levanon, Athar (Aptekar), Gliksberg, and Zaritzky. In this edition, the preface and notes, handsomely printed (in Austria), are in English. They are by Gabriel Talphir, the intrepid publisher of an art magazine in Israel as well as sponsor of this portfolio. While his notes are useful, his preface, purporting to analyze the development of art in Israel, is almost impenetrably turgid. However, that should not keep anyone from the illustrations, which speak clearly for themselves.

Published and printed in Tel Aviv two years ago, Dr. Haim Gamzu's *Painting and Sculpture in Israel* contains more than a hundred black and white reproductions of paintings, sculpture, and graphics, as well as ten color plates. While these last cannot compare in quality with the reproductions in the portfolio, they give a serviceable account of characteristic works by Zaritzky, Lubin, Castel, Janco, Rubin, and Simon; the black and white illustrations are entirely satisfactory. Except for the biographical notes, which are informative, the introductory text, in both Hebrew and English, is sadly pretentious and muddled.

THOUGH it is obviously premature to do so, people will ask whether there is a sign of a national art in Israel. In the sense that the work of a Clouet or Fragonard or Renoir is unmistakably French, that Titian's nudes cannot be taken for a German's any more than Cranach's can for an Italian's, the answer must be negative. The art of a nation, in the past at least, had some flavor of its culture, and a painting style borrowed from abroad betrayed itself just as surely as the accent of an acquired tongue. But the cultures were of long, slow growth. While the Jewish tradition is older than that of any European nation, its roots have, for nearly two thousand years, been aerial. An artist expressing himself in a material medium needs more earthy nourishment if he is to reflect a national quality, and the new Israel is, count it literally from the day of Independence or from the first modern Zionist migration, but five or seventy years old. Possibly the international style now in the making will not so readily be traced to its national source, and painting everywhere will have some common denominator like today's French influence. The question of a specific Israeli art would then be pointless. All that we can say now is that the painters who have laid stress on the landscape of the country and the appearance of its people have created works of an authenticity denied even the more talented of transient artists. But the art which conveys a feeling of place or people is not necessarily of that country. Grant Wood's "American Gothic" and "Daughters of Revolution" are strongly American in subject, but the art is 15th-century Flemish, not contemporary American.

And if a national art does develop in Israel, would that, by definition, make it the *Jewish* art so many theoreticians have tried to define with or without looking at actual work of Jewish artists? The game of finding out what is Jewish in the works of Jews who are nationals of other countries would then become even more elusive than it is now.

But I leave the game and the question to the future. Right now the fact is more important—the fact that there is so much good painting being done in Israel today.

* *Israel Painters*, Gazith Art Publishing, Tel Aviv, $6.00. Available at bookstores here or from the company's American representative: Mrs. Mignon Eisenberg, 185 Claremont Avenue, New York 27, N. Y.

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THE BOX

A Story

DAN JACOBSON

MY BROTHER and I kept homing pigeons for many years. We had a *hok* at the bottom of the back yard, and were members of the Lyndhurst Junior Homing Pigeon Society. We used to send our birds south, to Spytfontein and Dors River, and farther, deep into the Karroo, to Krom River and Beaufort West. Sometimes they all came back, sometimes only a few: in the Society's races we were in the first three only once, I think. But we watched the pigeons assiduously, their mating and their breeding, and their performances, and even their personal characteristics.

In the season in which our enthusiasm reached its peak we even infected Jan Louw, the Colored houseboy. He used to laugh at our affection for the birds, but he was interested in them himself and followed their performances keenly. "That is one going to come back," he would say, pointing at Brighteyes, the blue bar hen, "but that one is going to get lost." The one he meant, Sleepy, nibbled unconcernedly at her feathers. He was often as wrong as he was right in his prophecies, he went too much by size. A big pigeon was a good one, for him. When he was wrong, we teased him about it. "You will see I'll be right next time," he said smiling. He was a smooth-skinned yellow-skinned young man, with a small European nose that he wrinkled as he smiled, in a youthful way. But otherwise he was older in habit and appearance than he ought to have been. He was already going plump; the work about the house was not very heavy, and as my father so very often said about the servants, "Where they came from, they've never seen food of the kind we give them." Fitting his plumpness Jan had a fat little sense of complacency that nothing could shake. If, for instance, he had said that a bird would not come back, and it did, he was not at all abashed. "It will get lost next time." In the same way, if we asked him to mend a puncture in our bicycle tube and he didn't do it, he would never make excuses or apologies. He would simply smile that fat youthful smile of his and suggest that we walk to school. It was only when my father ordered him to do the job that he would take the bicycle and the solution and a basin of water, and fix it up on the back *stoep*. While he worked he told us stories. He told us about the *koggelmander* that snatched at people walking through the veld, about how he had once seen a man stabbed at a dance, about Gong-gong and the diamond diggings where he had been born, and how they had tried to trap him with Illicit Diamond Buying when he had been only sixteen years old. He was not really a good story-teller; he wasn't interested enough in his own stories. The tube slithered in his hand as he passed it through the basin, he pulled it taut and a jet of tiny bubbles rose to the surface. *"Daar's hy. Ons het hom nou."* He spoke a curious mixture of Afrikaans and English, his English heavily Afrikanerized, and his Afrikaans very strongly marked with the high sharp notes of the Colored intonation.

WHAT he was more interested in was gossip. Particularly gossip about ourselves, about his three young masters: Master Dandy (that was myself), Master Hish (my brother Hirsh), and Master Yoshwa

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DAN JACOBSON'S article "A White Liberal Trapped by His Prejudices" appeared in our May issue. Mr. Jacobson was born in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1929, and now lives in Kimberley.

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(my brother Joshua). It was all gossip in the future tense, for he wasn't much interested in our immediate lives, I think because they were too far out of his ken. School successes or defeats, fights with the boys around the corner, Rugby, dressing up for the Jewish holidays, these did not interest him very much, not to talk about. But our futures, about that he could let himself go. In the same way in which he would confidently predict this or that bird's return, so he mapped out our careers. Master Dandy was going to go into *die politiek,* you could see how he liked himself. Master Yoshwa was going to be too busy running after the girls to worry about politics. Master Hish was going to make lots of money and become the richest man in Lyndhurst. His eyes narrowed against the sun in which we were sitting, his face glistening in the light, as he squatted on his haunches with one surprisingly tender spot of brown skin showing through a tear in his trousers, and his teeth white, and nose wrinkled, smiling at us, on the back *stoep,* in the back yard, in the front garden, "*Ja* Master Yoshwa you'll be running after the girls. *Ek kan sien hoe jy van die meisiemense hou.* I can see already how you like the girls." We used to contest his prophecies hotly.

He had a few songs, too, which he used to sing as he worked, or at our request. The one was quite daft: I am sitting, on the topping, of the *wereld.* But there was a nice Afrikaans one, that went, as far as I can remember and as far as I could make his pronunciation out:

Daar onder in die pampas vlei
Daar sny hul die waatlemoen.
So rooi soos bloed, so suiker soet
Dit lyk netsoos gesteelde goed.

Which could be translated: "There in the flat valley, they cut the watermelon. As red as blood, as sweet as sugar, it seems like stolen fruit."

He did his work quite well. There was not much for him to do. He pottered about in the garden, but growing a garden in Lyndhurst is an almost hopeless proposition, and ours consisted of a young wilderness of coarse *kikiyu* grass and a few beds of petunias. He made all the beds and polished all the floors, all the shoes, the bathroom. The cooking was done by Dora, who was his aunt. In the afternoon they both repaired to their rooms and slept through the heat, until about half-past three, when we came back from school clamoring for sandwiches and milk.

But the relationship between the servants and ourselves was a completely casual one, at least from our side: for the most part, if we had better things to do we simply disregarded them. So when I saw Jan busy with one of the butter boxes we used for mating nests for the birds, I took no notice of what he was doing. I remember him busy the whole afternoon, banging away at the box, singing to himself, but I didn't go up to him and ask him what he was making. Something for his room probably, the room that we all shrank from entering, with its cheap furniture and iron bedstead and bright calendar pin-up stuck to the wall, and all impregnated with Jan's smell, with what we knew simply as the Kaffir smell.

That evening, when I came back from cricket in the piece of veld behind the lane, my ears ringing with the sounds of our shouts and my eyes dim from the twilight into which we had strained our eyes to get in the last possible hit at the ball that appeared so suddenly before one's bat, swinging out of the gloom, Jan was waiting for me on the back *stoep.*

"Look, Master Dandy, you must come with me," he said, and beckoned me into the yard.

"What is it, Jan?"

But he was being mysterious and just went on walking into the depths of the back yard. I followed him impatiently.

"Look, Master, I made it for the pigeons." He held up a box for me. I couldn't see it in the darkness, so we went on to the back *stoep* again, and looked at what he had made in the light that came through the open kitchen door.

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My impatience gave way to embarrassment. The box was no good for the pigeons. Obviously he had put in a lot of work—there was a little front step, then a tiny room, a doorway into another room which was split horizontally into two levels, upstairs and downstairs. The other half of the box was given over to one larger room, with a little shelf round it. The whole thing was very well done, but useless; there would be no room in it for the breeding bowls, and besides the pigeons would simply have no use for all the partitions. It was a stupidity, a foolishness that Jan had made, I felt, but I didn't want to tell him that. I said, "It's very nice, Jan," and looked at it a bit more. He was smiling at me, proudly, with the pride of a craftsman in his work.

"Master Dandy didn't know that I could make such a clever thing?"

"No, I didn't know."

"I showed it to Master Yoshwa, and he said that it is very clever. *Kyk, Master Dandy, die duif kan hier inklim, en as hy moeg van die kamer is dan kan hy maar hier deurloop. En kyk die trappies.*" He explained the box to me eagerly, showing me with his hand how the pigeon could go through the doorway, and rest here, and his hand rested, and if it wanted to fly out it could do so, and his hand flew out of the box.

"It's very nice, Jan. It's a very nice box." I was hungry and went inside.

The next day was Saturday, and free of school. I went out to the pigeon coop early to see whether the squeaker we were expecting had pecked its way out of the egg on which Brighteyes was nervously sitting. I let the pigeons out for an early morning flight, and round and round they circled, with their wings beating sweetly in the air. They were flying low that day, though it was a clear day, clear blue sky with a promise of heat later in the day, and just a hint of the meager Karroo spring in the air, the sun-stricken spring. I had been planning to make a nest for a pair of birds which we were mating. I went into the woodshed and looked there among the coal and lumber, but there was no box suitable. Jan's box, the box he had worked on, was on the *stoep*. I was a little sorry to do so, but I had felt all along that the box was an absurdity, so I took his box and knocked out the partitions and the shelves and everything else that he had made, and fixed the box up as all the other mating boxes were made, and put it in the *hok*. Later, when the birds came down and had been shepherded into the *hok*, I locked up the two birds that were to be mated in their new austere home. And the rest of the day was Saturday, with no school, and the long hours to run loose in, about the flat withered streets and the veld behind the houses where lizards flickered on the rocks.

That night Jan asked me what had happened to his box.

"I put it in the *hok*."

"Is it in the *hok*? Let me go and see." He came back to me soon. "I don't see it in the *hok*, Master Dandy."

"Yet, it is there. I locked the pigeons up in it."

"Oh, the closed one. . . . But that isn't my box, Master Dandy."

"Yes it is. But I took out all the bits and pieces you'd put in. They were no good for the pigeons."

His mouth had fallen open. For the first time since we had started talking I began to feel I had done something wrong. "It was no good for the pigeons," I said again.

"*Hoe kan die kleinbaas?*" he started speaking, then walked away suddenly. It was twilight again, and again we were in the back yard. He walked to the *hok* at the end of the yard, and I heard him go in. I heard the pigeons flap their wings, and call, disturbed. I wondered what he was doing, and ran down the yard to see. He came out of the *hok*, holding his box in his hand.

"What have you done?" I shouted at him. "I put the pigeons in there."

"What have I done?" he asked me. "What have you done?" He lifted the box toward me. "Look at my box." He thrust it closer.

"Look at my box," he repeated, and he

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began to cry. At first I was more surprised than anything else. I had never seen a grown-up cry before, and I just watched the strange wrinkling of his face, the nose wrinkled as it did when he laughed, the tears running slowly down his cheeks. He sniffed. He did not move. He stood and cried, holding the box in his hand.

I COULDN'T stand it. I thought I would have done anything to stop him crying, as it went on and on. But there was nothing I could do. I said "I'm sorry," but it didn't help him. And anyway, though I was sorry, terribly sorry, I was still more surprised than anything else. I couldn't understand his grief; it was beyond my understanding that he should have had such grief for something of his making. I suppose my attitude could be verbalized into a wonder: I didn't know that they felt like that. And *they* were all the Colored and African people that I passed every day and took for granted, taking their serf-status and their ragged clothes and everything else about them, for granted. They were a strange, twilight people to me; I liked some and was afraid of others, but they were beyond an uncrossable barrier, even when we played with them or listened to them talking. And the barrier was simply that they didn't feel. They had emotions, I had seen them angry or laughing or subdued under a white man's curse. But somehow they weren't real emotions, my emotions, they were black emotions, and as such different. But now Jan had crossed the barrier. He was crying as I might cry. There was no difference between us at all. He was human, he was crying.

"Stop crying, Jan. You can make another box." But I could not touch him; I could not put my arm around him. He was still black. "Oh, Jan, you can make another box," I cried, louder for my late betrayal.

He walked away from me, carrying his box. I followed him a little way, calling out to him, but he didn't reply. He went to his room and shut the door. I knocked at the door but he did not answer me, and I left off knocking, and went back to the house.

SOMETHING went out of Jan after that. We were soon friends again, of course, but somehow it was different. Perhaps I had lost, or gained, something, too. I think in him there lurked throughout some remnant of his hurt and anger; I became self-conscious for the first time with him, hesitant, aware that there were things that I had to learn, whole worlds of feeling which I had somehow managed to look at from a distance before, and which now came close to me and stood next to me as I stood.

But he left our service shortly afterwards anyway, and joined the army. The war had broken out, and he joined the Cape Colored Corps, and was posted away from Lyndhurst. He came to the house once. How he had grown! He himself looked fit in his uniform, and he was very proud of it too. By chance, my brother who had also joined up was down on leave, and Jan was very happy about that. "We are both in Jan Smuts' army," he said.

Though in the long run we were saved that sad, stock embarrassing situation, in which the servant comes back, and comes back, and the children are grown, and the gap has grown too great to be crossed by anything but uneasy smiles and a talk of memories that embarrass as one is reminded of them. Unthinking and unfeeling as the childhood contact may have been, it was at least free of self-consciousness and that great gap which color has become—not merely a screen through which one observes the other's reaction, but actually a chain around one's limbs which prevents one moving at all in the former servant's direction, and without which one would feel mother-naked and ashamed. But, as I say, we were saved that in Jan's case, because he was killed at El Adam near Tobruk, in the fighting against the Germans in the Western Desert. We heard the news from Dora. She still comes, though she has long left our service; she has grown almost blind from the cataracts that are covering her eyes, and we buy off pity and guilt and contact with five shillings every visit, and perhaps a blanket, a blouse of my sister's, a pound of sugar.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

WE ADVANCE, SINGING

Jewish Education, the Sholem Aleichem Way

RUTH FIELD IGLEHART

ALTHOUGH I grew up in New York and dutifully completed the prescribed stages of its public school system, much of my early education took place in other and less familiar surroundings. From nine to three I worked energetically at geography, spelling, penmanship, and whatever other enlightenment the school considered suitable to my years. At weekly assemblies I sang "The Harp That Hung in Tara's Halls," and several years of music appreciation classes taught me to recognize the strains of "To a Wild Rose." I played tag in the schoolyard during recess and, safe among my friends, grumbled at the foibles of the reigning tyrants: the Miss Hughes or Miss Duff who, for the moment, held power over us.

By four o'clock, however, I had entered another world. The bright red brick of the newly built public school, with its many staircases and doorways all carefully identified by signs and arrows, its brown corridors speckled with large paintings of flowers and horses, its subterranean swimming pool and rooftop basketball court, all vanished. In their stead appeared an old two-story frame house whose upper reaches contained some battered side-arm chairs; a piano that could never, even in its best days, have produced more than tolerable sounds; a few ill-assorted bookcases and, in a back alcove, a clumsy Franklin stove that seemed to smoke even when it had no fuel.

But neither I nor the other children who spent their afternoons and evenings here thought the place shabby; its function was so different from that of the public school that it would never have occurred to us to compare them. It was, I suppose, a kind of academic underground, but it must have appealed to us as much for its divergence from what we considered customary in a school as for the actual knowledge it supplied. There were no tyrants here against whom to rebel: the one teacher was necessarily all things to all students. We called her "Comrade," and if any grievances arose they were less like an outbreak against constituted authority than a quarrel among relatives. We learned to know her—to foresee and sometimes to stave off her occasional bursts of temper. We could, just as we did with our parents, evoke her delight or praise by some sudden witticism or insight. And one day, perhaps when we reached the august age of twelve, we passed a threshold more subtle and satisfactory than formal graduation: we were admitted into intimacy and could call her by her first name.

MORE than physical differences or differences in attitude, however, set this world apart from the everyday one. Once you entered the frame house, you spoke another language and read books that could never

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THE Jewish passion for education struck out in many directions once the traditional *cheder* pattern found itself exposed to the free air of America. RUTH FIELD IGLEHART here describes one of the many systems of education that flourished—and still flourish—among the Jews of Eastern Europe and their children in America. Mrs. Iglehart was born in New York City in 1918, and was graduated from the New School for Social Research. She has published poetry and criticism, and has also written on the relations of law and the social sciences.

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have appeared on any ordinary school list. The songs you sang would have astonished your music appreciation class, and you discussed a remote but fascinating history and geography that had no place in nine-to-three life. Your penmanship exercises were of no use here because Yiddish—the language of this after-hours school—was written from right to left and used characters radically different from those of any Western language. Your very identity changed, the name to which you customarily answered being replaced by its Hebrew equivalent, so that for several hours you became a new and vaguely Biblical personage. And when, on special occasions, you stood at your seat and sang "The Children's Anthem," few of your public school associates would have recognized your fervent tones.

The anthem was sung to the tune of the old "Internationale" and began by announcing—in Yiddish, of course—that:

We children all are equals
We are all young and free,
Among us there are no rich or poor. . . .

and went on to a rousing chorus which we always fairly shouted:

Then long live the children,
May they grow very great,
And to the work of building and creating
Advance, singing!

Between my ninth and thirteenth years, I must have spent every weekday afternoon as well as occasional Saturday mornings in that little second-story room, and my "graduation" class included at least a dozen equally industrious children. It is difficult now to recapture the sense of dedication—always somewhat ridiculous in retrospect—which we brought to our studies. Most of us believed, and all of us were constantly reminded, that our personal efforts could advance the culture of an entire people. We also knew the Jewish legend in which the world was said to rest on the shoulders of seven pious old men, so we did not think ourselves too few for our smaller task.

Fortunately, this Messianic ardor was tempered by more worldly concerns. The rent for our modest schoolhouse was often in arrears; the teacher's salary had sometimes to wait until additional funds could be raised; and although the piano had been a gift, the dancing teacher—a huge, moon-faced, smiling woman called Comrade Wolff, who used it to accompany her instruction—required to be paid for her Saturday morning efforts. Except for the very youngest, most of the students were aware of these difficulties. Some of us were permitted to remain for the Friday night meetings with parents, and so could follow the fortunes of the school at first hand. And I was always a party to these troublesome discussions; my parents had been among the founders of the school, spent much of their time worrying about its future, and, as I learned later, often supplied its deficits out of their own household funds.

MY PARENTS, who are intensely nationalistic but quite irreligious, have long been determined adherents of the movement to advance secular Jewish culture. When they came to the United States, however, they found that the only special schools provided for Jewish children were inflexibly Orthodox. And if this were not drawback enough, there was also a difficulty about language to increase their distaste for these schools. The language of the religious schools was the ancient Hebrew. My parents were convinced that Yiddish was the living speech of modern Jews and that the literature in Yiddish was well worth study. They could not, therefore, bring themselves to send me to a school where that language would be despised as a late and vulgar growth, useful mainly for conversation among women or illiterates. There was an additional difficulty, also: I was a girl and therefore a negligible quantity in the Orthodox religious view. Scholarship in the traditional sense has always been the prerogative of the men of the community.

To my parents, all this was a clear call to action. My father is still apt to remind us that when he left Austria for the United States, he was sixteen years old—and that he not only negotiated the trip successfully but also shepherded a younger sister to safety. And my mother claims to have been only fourteen when she set out from Russia. (She has always regarded her arrival here on the last ship permitted entry before the embargo caused by World War I as a special tribute to her courage in undertaking so dangerous a journey at so tender an age.) To such adventurous natures the founding of a school

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must have seemed a relatively simple enterprise.

Late in 1928, therefore, my father set out to ring doorbells and persuade his neighbors both to contribute funds toward the establishment of a school, and to send their children to it once it was under way. Ordinarily a shy and mild-mannered man who looked forward to his weekly walk in the park and his nap after lunch, my father now spent Sunday after Sunday arguing with strangers. His low but persistent voice filled living rooms he had entered uninvited, and his deceptively quiet manner nudged the doubtful toward consent. And on weekdays, my mother—usually somewhat distant in her dealings with neighbors and tradesmen—proselytized among them, bringing to her persuasions all the fervor and heat of a characteristically Russian temperament.

Every few weeks my father and two of his friends who were also engaged in this labor of love would meet in the local laundry shop (it belonged to one of the volunteer fund-raisers) to compare notes, count up the contributions, and discuss strategy. And despite the indifference of most of our neighbors to the fate of Jewish culture, within a few months enough money had been raised to rent a schoolhouse and pay a teacher, and enough students had been promised to make the venture feasible.

THE school that was inaugurated then as part of the system of Sholem Aleichem Schools scattered throughout the city is now about to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary. But although classes are conducted in the same place and by the same teacher, many of the school's attitudes and ideas have been altered by time and the pressure of outer events. Indeed, I was somewhat surprised and dismayed to learn recently that this epoch in my life—which hardly seems remote or historical to me—has now been classified as a "phase," has been labeled "classical secularism" and superseded by a newer and, presumably, more adequate ideology. The term for this more modern development is, I am told, "semi-secularism"—a phrase I am not certain I understand, but which seems to imply a greater amiability toward Orthodox religious views and rituals than I remember.

The first Sholem Aleichem School in New York was established forty years ago, and a central Institute organized in 1918. Their initial motive was to broaden the basis of Jewish education and, specifically, to provide a system of schools free of the domination of fraternal orders or political groups. They saw their primary concern as the advancement of a secular Jewish culture, and accordingly took their name from the writer whose ironic stories had given literary expression to the hopes and trials of thousands of European Jews. Other goals found their way into the declared principles of the schools: the validity of the scientific method, for instance, was affirmed in a general Declaration of Principles formulated in 1927, and the findings of modern child psychology and pedagogy endorsed.

All the schools were united in the pursuit of an ideal: the furtherance of Jewish culture. And though the particular emphasis might vary from school to school—ours, for instance, was strong on social justice, and the word "bourgeois" became an epithet we all learned to use with a proper show of opprobrium—the general pattern was much the same. We were all taught the rudiments of Yiddish, since even those who came from families where Yiddish was spoken could seldom either read or write the language. In my own case, Yiddish had, I am told, been my first language; but I had discarded it for English as soon as I began to play with other children, and so my first year at the new school was spent in learning what was, in effect, a foreign language.

Reading and writing, however, were only the beginnings of a blossoming of national consciousness. As soon as we were able to deal adequately with the printed page, we were started on a vast project: the history of the Jews in all ages, climates, and conditions. In practice, this meant beginning with Genesis and working your way toward your own schoolroom, proceeding in orderly fashion from Adam to yourself, as you bent over your textbook. (The history text was so bulky, and its pages so closely printed, that bending over it was a physical necessity rather than a ritual gesture.) Each school usually selected its own textbooks—ours, for instance, were often imported from Poland, where our teacher had many friends and colleagues with whom she corresponded. The history text, however, was standard for all the schools. Written by

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an eminent 19th-century Polish Jewish scholar, it had been translated into many languages and had become the authorized version of secular Jewish history. Originally, this work must have run to nine or ten volumes; for our "childish" understanding, however, it had been compressed into two huge, unwieldy books—cruel in length (Volume I ended, as I remember, with the Fall of the Second Temple) and unattractive in appearance. Its only adornments were occasional maps of cities and rivers now forgotten or called by other names, and some tiny cuts depicting dramatic moments in the lives of the Assyrians and Babylonians. Of these, my favorite was a scene showing the mad king, Nebuchadnezzar, contentedly nibbling the grass before his palace.

But the gaiety of our storybooks more than compensated for the dull history text. With their foreign air, their lively illustrations (usually of boys and girls in the dress of Eastern European Jews, a dress just as exotic to us as it would have seemed to Irish or Italian children), and their amusing texts, they brought a touch of the strange and fanciful into a schoolroom that might otherwise have eventually lapsed into solemnity. We read Lithuanian folktales, Polish pastorals, Russian novels. I remember in particular a two-volume saga by the modern Russian novelist, Bergelson, which seemed to me a breathtakingly realistic picture of the delights and romance of rural life. I think of it still as mainly concerned with wide open spaces, wild horses, and a charming heroine—although there must surely have been much else to occupy two volumes—but I have never had the courage to reread the novel with a disenchanted, adult eye.

Even the jokes we told had their origins in Europe; we laughed at the simpletons of Chelm or the pranks of the two boys in Sholem Aleichem's stories, without feeling their distance from us in either time or space. We spent almost as many hours in discussion of Jewish proverbs as we did on literary or historical material, and a seemingly simple phrase, like "Never show a fool a half-finished job," could give rise to the sort of extensive exegesis that might once have been lavished on Talmudic studies. We examined the social origins of the bitter reproaches made by writers like Mendele or Peretz against the failings of their fellow Jews, and learned to sense the affronted pride and affection underlying these reproaches. And we were never surprised when a lesson dealing with a purely lyrical poem was immediately followed by one devoted to a play about sweatshops.

We accepted this huge and variegated literary diet, believing it offered a truthful picture of the Jewish life of which we were, or would become, a part. Nor did the fact that it was based almost entirely on European and, to us, foreign experience present any difficulties. Indeed, for most of us who knew only the Bronx apartment houses in which we lived and the city streets in which we played, these stories of farms and green fields and country towns were often more exhilarating than instructive. We read them with the same enjoyment that we read American stories of the Wild West and of cowboys, and sometimes, I am afraid, gave as little thought to any social message they might contain.

The details of many of these stories have, of course, long since been blurred and overlaid by later and more vivid impressions. What remains, however, is the sensation of warmth and intimacy in which they were read and discussed. The many afternoons and evenings narrow to one long winter twilight, and I see myself walking uphill past the familiar stores: the candy and newspaper stands, the bakery with fresh rolls heaped in its brightly lit windows, the "appetizing store" that sold nuts, salted fish, and pickled dainties of all sorts and could easily be identified by the barrels of herring displayed just outside its doors. The light of the street lamps is pleasantly misted by cold; the old man at the corner who sells baked sweet potatoes holds his hands—the fingers comfortably protruding from torn black gloves—over the chimney of his portable stove; the streets seem alive with a loud domestic hum out of which rise occasional fragments of complaint or conversation, or the lugubrious sounds of a violin or piano being "practiced."

I turn the corner, enter an open door, and stamp noisily up an uncertain stairway. At once I am enveloped by even more familiar warmth and noise. The "babies" have not yet finished their lessons and so, smug in our greater age, we can pass the time in whispered jokes and subdued horseplay. I hang my coat and hat on one of the hooks that

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ring the little back room, slide my books across the linoleum-covered floor until they reach the heap of books set down by earlier arrivals, and settle to the solemn business of amusing myself and—if I can—the others. Occasionally we laugh too boisterously, or the boys, tiring of conversation, erupt into violent wrestling bouts. Then the face of the teacher appears in the doorway, hisses *"Shahhh!"* with professional ferocity, and disappears again. Finally, the babies go home to their suppers and, still joking and jostling one another, we take our places in the schoolroom.

I HAVE, since that time, spent almost too many years in all kinds of classrooms; yet this one still seems to me to have been admirably conducted. The discussions were, I suppose, rather too solemn and highminded for what would now be termed our "age level." But they *were* discussions: vigorous, fairly well-reasoned, and, sometimes, even mildly speculative. Constant prodding on the teacher's part, as well as the characteristically ironic tone of Yiddish literature, kept us from that literalism and concern for irrelevant detail with which children can destroy almost any work of art. Perhaps we felt free to talk, to hold opinions strongly, and to defend them energetically, because nobody seemed surprised at our doing so. Almost all the teachers and parents involved in the Sholem Aleichem schools had come from Europe where they had, while still very young, taken part in radical or Zionist activities. Some had risked their lives in these causes, and they considered it natural that their children should feel free to speak and act boldly.

I can, therefore, remember very little of that classroom shyness which often afflicts the young, and by which we ourselves were sometimes overtaken when reciting lessons in our public school classrooms. We each had our notebooks—usually a *heft* specially ruled and arranged for Yiddish script—in which we recorded our opinions, comments, and literary efforts. It was by no means uncommon for us to receive as home assignments for the following day the writing of a critical article on some author we had been reading, as well as a discussion of some phase of, say, 19th-century history. And simple summaries of the text were never considered sufficient; to be acceptable it was necessary that our exercises show some indication of thought, however juvenile or undeveloped. So it came about that you might often find a class of twelve-year-olds listening solemnly to a paper on the philosophic, historical, and political implications of the appearance of the "false Messiahs" among 17th-century Jewry. Our faces intent, a hand occasionally raised to indicate disagreement or the desire for discussion, we followed the arguments carefully, each of us awaiting the moment when we might stand up, open our notebooks, and in a loud, clear voice expound our own views on false Messiahs.

No moral, social, or political discussion was considered off limits to us, and in this sense our classes here supplied, both in atmosphere and factual information, far more than we could acquire through the more sedate and selective program of the public school. It seems to me now that if there were any drawback to these wide-ranging studies, it lay in the fact that they served to emphasize the gulf between Jewish and English education. For though you might hear little about the American Civil War in the Sholem Aleichem school, in your public school you would never learn about the Assyrians and Babylonians or, closer in time, about the life of Eastern European Jews or the rise of the labor movement. The effect, therefore, was to make it seem as though two separate but parallel streams of history were under discussion, neither of which was ever likely to impinge on the other. And for me, at least, the impressive scope of the Jewish history, as well as the intensity with which it was presented, have caused it to remain much the more vivid of the two.

OCCASIONALLY, of course, our total immersion in adult issues had ludicrous results. I can still remember the Saturday morning I spent listening to a handsome Estonian lady, newly arrived in the United States and ostensibly engaged to teach us the elements of Hebrew, dramatically arguing against the double standard. "If my husband were to be unfaithful," she cried fiercely, "I would leave him tomorrow." And while none of us quite understood what she meant, we thought her very pretty and felt that her husband had somehow mistreated her. But the next week he came to class (apparently the single standard meant alternating the teaching chores),

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and he also was handsome and seemed incapable of cruelty to a woman; and so we abandoned the attempt to understand what either the single or double standard might be and concentrated on linguistic problems.

Study, however, was not the only province of the school. There were many holidays to be celebrated, chief among these being Chanukah. There were presents and parties and *dreidlach*. (The last are small silver tops whose segmented sides are each engraved with a different Hebrew character. You spin the *dreidl* and, I regret to say, bet a certain number of hazelnuts on the letter you hope will turn up when the spinning stops.) And at Passover there were intramural festivities. All the pupils of the various Sholem Aleichem schools were gathered up and then set down in a giggling, chattering mass at Maurice Schwartz's Theater on Second Avenue. But our boisterousness lasted only until the impressive figure of the actor appeared from between the curtains to tell us, in his deep, slightly European-sounding Yiddish, which play he had chosen this time. Each year, he and his company gave a program prepared especially for us—always from Sholem Aleichem's works, of course, and usually very funny. I would guess that the performances were almost as good as we thought them and no actors, whatever their language, could have asked for a more enthusiastic audience.

These pleasures, however, were all "occasional"; they depended on holidays or special events. Much more to our taste were the regular Friday night parties, nominally reserved to parents, but which we—an elite of age rather than peculiar merit—were also privileged to attend. I suppose what we found most attractive about these weekly gatherings was the transformation they seemed to work upon our parents. Once seated along the narrow trestle-tables put up for these occasions and covered with overlapping lengths of borrowed white tablecloths, the most familiar adult was likely to change before your eyes. Morose and (to us) ancient men miraculously shed their years as they joked with their neighbors. Seemingly solemn heads of families sang loudly and accompanied themselves by tapping the thick sides of their tea glasses with their spoons. Fretful women bloomed into contentment as they hurried back and forth setting the table with platters of cake and bowls of fruit; or, their serving chores over, cracked pumpkin seeds between their teeth and laughed with unaccustomed abandon. Often there was wine to augment the good humor of the meeting—a sweet, homemade wine, far too mild to account for the gaiety of the assemblage. And toward the end of the evening, when the jokes grew broader and the singing louder, you might almost believe that our parents had unwittingly been captured by the spirit of the songs they sang, songs for the most part deriving from the life of Hasidic Jews almost a century ago.

Paradoxically, the unfamiliar joy which took possession of our parents during these Friday night festivities seemed to bring them closer to us than more customary moods could. We had difficulty in recognizing them, but we took an intimate pleasure in their transformation—as though we had somehow helped to engineer it. It seems to me now that at such moments we were closer to genuine affection for them than children usually permit themselves to feel. In general, the line we drew between ourselves and the child's hereditary enemy, the grown-up, was less rigidly observed here than outside the walls of the school. And this mingling of worlds was characteristic not only of personal relationships but also of intellectual ones. When in the final semesters we came to study modern Jewish literature, for instance, we found that many of the writers were men we knew in person.

Nor was acquaintance with a literary figure always an unmixed pleasure to us. I can remember a terrible day when I was about eleven years old, and was riding in the subway with a friend who in local circles was considered somewhat of a musical prodigy. As we talked we suddenly realized that across the aisle from us sat a well-known Jewish writer, a friend of both our families. He noticed us at the same moment, and nodded amiably. Then motivated, I suppose, by a desire to be kind and take an interest in our childish affairs, he beamed at my friend and shouted across the car in his characteristically Polish-accented Yiddish: *"Nu, shreibst epes an opera, shreibste?"* Both of us shrank from the stares of the other passengers, all of whom were startled and most of whom had understood these words and were curious to

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see what sort of child it was that wrote operas in his spare time. At that moment I know that I, for one, wished that my parents had chosen less literary friends. In any case, however, it was difficult to learn to view as a public character a man with whom you often shared your dinner, or who patted your head abstractedly as he asked after your latest exploits. So difficult, in fact, that often the transition was never quite accomplished; for my own part, I frequently felt that there must be some mistake—that Mr. X, despite his noble head and expansive gestures, simply could not be the same man who wrote the books I read.

PERHAPS this overlapping of public and private worlds, of adult and childhood interests, was a final effort to prop a weakening structure. For the children have vanished, the grown-ups are rarely so gay any more, and the writers have almost stopped writing books for which there would, in any case, be only a handful of readers. The world I have been describing was always a small one; now it has been painfully diminished by time and history, and soon it may exist only as a recollection of departed warmth and a speech once again become alien. The ideal which my parents and their friends held before themselves has been partially realized, but in a form so different from their imaginings that it seems barely recognizable. The State of Israel is, after all, a remote and foreign one. They approve of its existence and support its efforts, but feel few real ties with it. Moreover, the new state has repudiated Yiddish even more violently than the religious schools ever did. There seems hardly a corner left in the world, therefore, where Yiddish can hope to flourish as a living language.

Listening to my two-year-old son attempt to talk, I have been reminded of all this—of the words I once knew, forgot, and then learned again. I can see that he may not be likely either to need or to want to learn those words; indeed, there may be little reason for him to do so. It is a curious sensation to think of yourself as belonging to a generation with which a particular form of culture, however limited, will end. My principal regret, however, is not for this inevitable change, but for the fact that my son will have missed an irreplaceable intimacy and gaiety, and that he must find new words with which to advance, singing.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE BANQUET OF GOD

The Pentecost Poem of Akdamuth

THEODOR H. GASTER

THE Aramaic poem *Akdamuth* is one of the most famous elements of the traditional morning service on the first day of the Feast of Weeks. It is chanted by the cantor before the reading of the lesson from the Law. The poem plays on the ancient Jewish fancy that, at the end of days, God will spread a banquet for the righteous in heaven, at which they will eat from the flesh of the defeated monster Leviathan, the mythical dragon who personifies rebellion against the Divine Law. This banquet is represented as the reward which the pious Israelite may expect for faithfully maintaining the Covenant—concluded, according to tradition, on the Feast of Weeks. *Akdamuth* is believed to have been written by a certain Meir ben Isaac of Orleans towards the end of the 11th century. Owing to the obscurity of its language and its many recondite allusions, it has today lost something of its traditional appeal, and the recitation of it has been discarded in most congregations.

In the present translation I do not attempt to be literal, because a literal rendering of so allusive and tortuous a composition would be grotesque. I seek only to reproduce the general tone and content, in a form which will be neither servile and wooden on the one hand, nor a mere loose paraphrase on the other.

—THEODOR H. GASTER

ERE the Word of God I read,
Ere I con the Holy Screed,
Let these feeble lips rehearse
In their broken, halting verse
Praises, ne'er so scant, to Him
Whose voice forever grows not dim,
Whose splendor as a flower blows
Which never knew the winter snows;
Whose everlasting glories reach
Beyond the power of human speech.

If all the skies a parchment were,
And every reed a quill, and there
Were nought but ink within the seas,
And all mankind were penmen—these
Would ne'er suffice His praise to write
Who reigns on earth and in the height,
Who, all alone, unwearyingly,
Made this great universe to be,
And, never resting night or day,
Brought all creation 'neath His sway;
Who, soft and low, on that first morn,
Whispered, and a world was born
Who made all things in heaven and earth
Ere the seventh day had birth;
And, when creation's work was done,
At twilight, with the setting sun,
In glory incandescent came
And sat upon a throne of flame.

A thousand thousand angels throng
To serve Him and, a myriad strong,
The heavenly host each morning press
To make to Him their sweet address.
Flaming six-wing'd seraphs sing
His praise, and through the welkin ring
Ceaseless, in a sweet accord,
The words: Thrice holy is the Lord!
And, like the surging of the deep,
Through all the wide-flung heavens sweep
The thunders of the cherubim
As they His royal glory hymn
And rush to where the rainbow hues
Or His eternal light diffuse
High radiance; and as they fly
Unto the seraphs make reply:

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"O blessèd He, whose glory lies
Not secreted from mortal eyes,
But streameth from Him like a light,
To pierce the darkness of the night!"*

Yet, one short hour, and ne'er again
Each angel sings the joyous strain,
One hour only steps before
The Throne, and then returns no more;
While Israel, which is His delight,
Rests not neither day nor night,
But sings His praise continually,
For He hath chosen it to be
The agent of His will, to show
His glory in the here below,
To be the servant of His cause,
To labor without stint or pause.
And so He holds their praises dear,
And so, as every hymn draws near,
He takes the words which forth have flown
From Israel's lips, and weaves a crown,
Or wears them for phylacteries
Between His everlasting eyes.

Lo, it beseems that I should sing
The glories of the world's great King;
When now earth's monarchs ask with glee:
"Who is thy Lover? Who is He
For whom thou dwellst in lion's den
And bravest all the wrath of men?"
And when they say, "Oh, do our will,
And we shall all thy dreams fulfill,"
'Tis meet that I should then rehearse
(Albeit in this halting verse)
The glory of my King, and say:
"Your eyes are blind, your feet are clay!
Oh, what avails your scepter'd pride
His sovran majesty beside?
And what avails your panoply,
When Israel's Champion rideth high,
When His salvation dawneth bright,
But ye be veiled in darkest night?

Lo, when His exiles He hath led,
To Jerusalem, there shall be shed
Upon that city, day and night,
The splendor of His radiant light;
And silver-linèd clouds shall be
Spread o'er it for a canopy,
When He doth like a bridegroom ride
At last, at last, to claim His bride.
Then, round about, on golden chairs
(Each one upraised on seven stairs),
The righteous as His guests shall dine,
And perfect bliss shall be their wine;
And o'er their heads, for chandeliers,
Shall hang the radiance of the spheres,
A beauty which no lips can tell,
Whereon no earthly eye can dwell,
A starry glory which of old
No prophet's vision e'er foretold;
And they beside the Lord shall walk
In Eden's close, and softly talk
With Him, and to themselves shall say:
"This is He for Whom alway
We waited through captivity;
This is our Lord, yea, this is He."†

As maidens to the dance are led,
He will lead them, and outspread,
Like viands at a royal feast
Shall be the flesh of that fell beast,
That raging monster of the sea
Who dared assail His sovereignty.
For when that monster coils and curls
And beats the angry sea and hurls
Defiance at his sovran Lord,
Unsheathèd then shall be the Sword,**
And He that made him shall arise
And smite him, till that dead he lies.
The oxen on a thousand hills¶
Shall be their meat, the while He fills
Gleaming goblets crystalline
With that most rare and perfect wine
Which in His cellar He hath stored
Since first creation knew its Lord.

Now, good friends who hear this verse,
When that I the Law rehearse,
Bear in mind that if ye do
All that it enjoins on you,
Ye may earn a place thereby
At that great festivity.

PRAISED FOREVER BE THE LORD
WHO IN LOVE GAVE US HIS WORD.

*See Isaiah 6:2; Ezekiel 1:24; 3:12-13.
†See Isaiah 25:9.
**See Job 40:19.
¶See Psalm 50:10.

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ON THE HORIZON

THE JUGGLER: HOLLYWOOD IN ISRAEL

Tough Hombre in the Kibbutz

NATHAN GLICK

THE story of Israel seems, on the surface, a natural for Hollywood. It is, after all, an epic of pioneers, and the folklore of pioneering has been a staple of American films for nearly fifty years. The themes of the "Western" are the themes of Israel: refuge from tyranny and from city life, the crude settlement carved out of a wilderness, the drawn-out guerrilla warfare with a primitive native enemy, the conflict between individualist and communal ethics, the hope of a new beginning.

But when Hollywood did decide to make use of this new frontier, it was with a certain half-heartedness. Although a crew was sent to Israel to make *The Juggler* on location, the advertising for the film carefully avoids any hint of its subject and background. The reason for this is no doubt chiefly commercial: Americans may feel benevolently towards Israel, but they do not feel particularly involved. And the commercial failure of the English-language Israeli film *My Father's House* (1947) may have been one discouraging element. *My Father's House*, produced by Meyer Levin, was a simple, sentimental film that treated Israeli life and geography with a good deal of documentary poetry. Its failure could be explained by the absence of any actors known to American movie-goers, by its slow pace and quiet manner, and possibly most of all by a lack of enterprise on the part of American exhibitors.

Like *My Father's House*, *The Juggler* tells the story of the rehabilitation of a concentration camp victim in Israel, but it has the pace, the glamor, the fundamental extroversion that distinguish American movies. Kirk Douglas is called Hans Muller and is supposed to be impersonating a German Jewish vaudeville juggler, but his pugilist movements, his hysteria, his aggressive self-pity are borrowed whole from his parts in *The Champion*, *Ace in the Hole*, and *Detective Story*. As a specimen of kibbutz beauty, Milly Vitale is peculiarly improbable, with her light eyes, elusive accent, crisp shorts, and stiff, sturdy Boy Scout's way with a rifle. *The Juggler* follows the example of *My Father's House* in seizing on the visual and musical excitement of a hora danced at night around a bonfire, but now the hora is staged like a musical number, with the camera boomed high to photograph a perfect circle of smooth, handsome, and flavorless couples. And throughout the film, the theme of rehabilitation is submerged in the clipped plot of a thriller chase which allows brief and teasing glimpses of the prickly Israeli landscape.

STILL, as a way of getting at the phenomenon of Israel, the story of *The Juggler* has much in its favor. The regeneration of the victimized Central and East European Jew is, if not the whole meaning of Israel,

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ALTHOUGH Hollywood has not entirely ignored the existence of the State of Israel, Stanley Kramer's production *The Juggler*, now going the rounds of American theaters, represents the first really ambitious effort in American films to make cinematic use of the landscape and social problems of the young country. NATHAN GLICK here discusses how well the Hollywood approach has succeeded in conveying the Israeli reality. Mr. Glick's most recent contribution to COMMENTARY, an analysis of Chaplin's *Limelight*, appeared in March of this year.

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certainly its most poignant contemporary meaning. *The Juggler* responds to this theme with a quick and natural good will that is characteristically American, yet parallels the energy and communal temper of Israel. Evoking the familiar contrast of American bluntness and optimism against European sophistication and pessimism, *The Juggler* merely substitutes Israel for America in opposition to a Europe which has added the experience of the concentration camp. The hero's misfortunes are thus seen to arise from his inability to understand that people in Israel are exactly what they seem, that in Israel doctors cure and policemen protect. Instead he brings with him his fanatical European suspicions, the search for evil motives behind simple gestures. He rejects the doctor's offer of help; he smashes the face of a friendly policeman, by this act recreating for himself the familiar role of the hunted European Jew. Even the thirteen-year-old sabra boy and the young woman from the kibbutz who befriend him in his flight from the police feel impelled to speak of their straightforwardness when faced with the juggler's penchant for evasive jokes.

A minor thematic contrast, played alongside this dominant one, is the hero's imported contempt for human life set against Israel's high valuation of individual lives. "We need everyone," the doctor tells him. But the juggler, on three occasions, is prepared to kill without actually being threatened. When he aims a rifle at several Syrian patrol guards who are unaware of his presence, the kibbutz girl exclaims: "We don't kill people in cold blood!" Her statement carries overtones, not merely of Israel's humanism, but also of the ethics of the American "Western," where you must give your enemy a fair chance to draw.

The hero, with his jumpy violence, his morbidity, his claustrophobia, and his relished cynicisms ("Home is a place you lose." "Hope is a naughty word") typifies an "unhealthy" European sensitivity that has been intensified by the experience of the concentration camp. The Israelis are not concerned to understand the juggler's state of mind or the experience that produced it; they want only to cure him, to make him healthy and useful. In this the kinship of America and Israel is clearest: both are pioneer communities, setting a premium on health and practical ability, on action rather than reflection, on being sensible rather than possessing sensibility. "We need a juggler like we need a hole in the head," says the Haifa relocation interviewer, sadly; later in the camp barracks a call is sent out for carpenters, masons, electricians, plumbers, and most of the men flock out in response, leaving the juggler behind with the sick and the aged. (Done more scrupulously, this scene could have been an astute dramatic device for posing Israel's overwhelming occupational dilemma: her shortage of skilled labor and her fantastic abundance of traders and unskilled workers. Instead, the director and writer abandon the Israeli reality in order to impose an artificial "normality" and give the star his moody dramatic solo.)

In its treatment of the hero, however, the film reveals a split personality. Thematically, as we have seen, the juggler represents Europe's sickness as contrasted with Israel's health. Thus the hopeful ending of the film consists simply in his admitting he is a sick man and crying out to be helped, and we are allowed to assume that now his sickness will be cured. But behind its surface commitment to normality, *The Juggler* glorifies the bitter disenchantment of the outlaw. The hero's cynical wit forms the intellectual cornerstone of the movie; without it, the dialogue would collapse of sheer inanity. *The Juggler* may symbolize a lost cause, but he wins most of the verbal exchanges. Asked why he hides the fact that he has been in a concentration camp, he says, "I'm selfish about my pleasures." Even the tired unoriginality of many of his jokes serves to deepen his effect. When he says, "If all the old men would hire young men to die for them, a young man could make a very nice living," he is repeating a traditionally ironic piece of Jewish dialectic, and thus suggesting that his cynicism has roots in a Jewish wisdom more ancient and perhaps more typical than the pioneering optimism of Israel's kibbutzim.

This subterranean espousal of the outwardly disapproved qualities of the juggler reveals not merely the Hollywood writer's cynicism about the myths he refurbishes, but even more the necessities of the star system, in which the protagonist, whether good or evil, must be somehow admirable and su-

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perlatively endowed, and thus on some level must triumph over whatever moral ideas his story is designed to present. Hans Muller is not only a juggler, he is the best juggler in the world—though we never see him juggle more than three balls. He wins instant affection from children and instant love from the first Israeli girl he meets. In his readiness to declaim his guilt, torture, and self-pity, he is a veritable Hamlet, as well as very close to Hollywood's portrait of the movie writer in *Sunset Boulevard*. And while his profession may strike the interviewer in Haifa as superfluous, Hollywood clearly prefers the reaction of the Israeli children who find it wonderful and magical; it is Hollywood's own professional myth that the talented entertainer is God's special gift to man.

Significantly, the one deception that Douglas carries off with full conviction is the juggler's pretense—allegedly for the purpose of throwing off his pursuers—that he is an American. When he tells his admiring young sabra guide that he is Rita Hayworth's cousin, that he lived in Hollywood, and that he taught Hopalong Cassidy to ride a horse, he is playing a complicated game of identity. The function of this game is to call up the Israeli's envy and admiration of American wealth and glamor, at the same time that it neutralizes the American spectator's presumed resistance to the foreignness of the subject by assuring him that the hero is, after all, only Kirk Douglas acting a part.

If the virtues of *The Juggler* arise from the affinities of America and Israel, its failures derive from an inability of the American film-makers to absorb what is alien to American experience. The whole meaning of the concentration camp is squeezed into the claustrophobia of close quarters, and the hero's reaction becomes a variation of the "Western" theme, "Don't fence me in." The film's response to any profounder sickness of soul is a good-natured and bossy impatience. Its treatment of contemporary Israeli life likewise misses much that is indigenous and real. The Israeli kibbutz comes to resemble a comfortably appointed American adult vacation camp where people sit around reading newspapers, joking about the coffee ("It's improving: last week it tasted like dishwater, today like tea"), watching entertainments, or dancing the hora. No one is shown to us at work.

Perhaps the most glaring failure, however, is the absence of any personal, intense feeling for the history and landscape of Palestine (the kind of feeling, for example, that *My Father's House* showed in its use of Jewish holiday celebrations and its contrast of the old and new Jerusalems). It is almost heartbreaking to think that the film company traveled all the way to Israel and came back with such a poverty of scenes of daily life, whether in the streets, in homes, or in the kibbutz; or that landscapes familiar to the Western imagination for almost two thousand years should be treated with such offhand flatness. Most of all, *The Juggler* lacks a sense of tradition. But perhaps sheer indifference is preferable, after all, to the lacquered fetishism or the supernatural hush (in Parker Tyler's phrase) that too often passes in Hollywood for piety.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

HOW DISCRIMINATORY ARE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS?

The Evidence of Recent Studies

MORTON CLURMAN

AMONG the problems of our age, that of prejudice is not the least complex. In its action and reactions, a web is woven in which we are all caught. Like it or not, where a set of attitudes toward any group exists, the very awareness of this, regardless of how we ourselves react, makes it impossible to be unprejudiced in the literal sense of the word—that is, to think without pre-judging. The awkwardness of the Gentile telling an acquaintance whom he has just discovered to be a Jew that some of his best friends are Jews—and really meaning it—or the white who is painfully aware of the Negro's suspicion explaining that he really has no special "feeling" about Negroes—and believing he means it—merely indicates we are all subject, one way or another, to prejudice.

The psychological complications of prejudice are virtually infinite: ranging from the self-deception and rationalizations of the "superior" group to the super-sensitivity (one recalls the joke about the stutterer telling a friend that he was turned down for a job as a radio announcer because of anti-Semitism) and self-hatred of the "inferior" group. These complications make accurate measurements of prejudice extremely difficult. Yet we keep trying to measure it because we must.

MORTON CLURMAN here reports on a recent large-scale study of prejudice which was undertaken by the Roper organization to determine whether colleges discriminate against Jewish applicants. Mr. Clurman tries to sum up the meaning of the Roper findings, at the same time taking into account criticisms by other authorities. His article "Will Births Outstrip Mankind's Resources?" appeared in this department in March 1952.

The measurement of discrimination, the effect, as distinct from prejudice, the cause, is not quite so hopeless. Prejudice is an attitude, as intangible as most attitudes. But discrimination, after all, is an act that can be observed, reported, even legislated against.

Yet since discrimination means an act motivated by prejudice, and since acts that appear to be very similar can have different causes, the problem of locating discrimination ultimately comes down to that of locating motive. And that, as Dr. Watson knew, is not always easy.

EVEN the case mentioned of the Jewish stutterer who wanted to be a radio announcer is not quite so simple as it seems. It is possible, after all, that he *was* turned down because he was Jewish. For example, he may not have had an interview, or having had one, may not have stuttered during it. The obvious point of the joke, however, is the rather slim chance that discrimination was involved.

There are several ways in which this hypothetical case of the stuttering applicant could be cleared up. A purely "scientific" technique might be to proceed from the assumption that nothing was known about anti-Semitism, stutterers, or radio announcers, and to do a survey of present employees of the radio station. If a large proportion of non-stuttering Jewish announcers were found, the probability of discrimination would be low. If none, or almost none of the announcers was Jewish, the probability of discrimination would be higher. If many of them were non-Jewish stutterers, it would be higher still. But if the station already employed many Jewish stutterers as radio announcers . . . But enough—that way madness

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lies. Anyhow, all these data could be run through IBM machines on punch cards and the probabilities of discrimination in this particular case computed to any number of decimal places.

A less elaborate method might be to assume that something was known about stutterers, anti-Semitism, and radio announcers, and to ask the interviewer why the applicant was not hired. If he said "stuttering," the case against discrimination could be considered proven.

To the stupefied bystander, the second method would seem to have obvious advantages. But social scientists do not always see things that way. Instead, a minimum number of reasonable assumptions, and a maximum use of IBM machines, involved statistical procedures, and lengthy questionnaires seem to be prescribed, even where less devious methods would appear to be adequate.

A CASE in point is a recent monumental study of discrimination in college admissions sponsored by the American Council on Education and conducted by the Elmo Roper organization under the direction of Julian Woodward. To determine the incidence of discrimination, a nationwide sample of more than 10,000 white high school seniors were personally interviewed in May 1947. Negroes were omitted from interviews because there were too few Negro seniors in Northern high schools to furnish a statistically reliable sample by this method, and the segregated Southern schools clearly presented a special problem.

In addition to this nationwide sampling of 10,000 seniors—of whom 3,500 were applicants for college admission—a second "big city" sample of almost 5,500 seniors in cities of half a million population or over were interviewed, of whom 2,338 were college applicants.

Obviously, there were bound to be difficulties in this approach, and the Roper organization ran into more than their share of them. The assumption, undoubtedly correct, was that many factors influenced the admission of students to colleges. But the larger the number of factors assumed to have some causal connection with a single event—in this case admission to college—the more difficult it becomes to determine the relative weight of each factor. If our hypothetical would-be radio announcer also had a chronic smoker's cough, were illiterate, and couldn't speak English, it might be very difficult indeed to discover the exact weight of each disability in his rejection.

In the Roper study matters are further complicated by the interdependence of many of the factors. For example, it was found that many colleges preferred the sons and daughters of alumni. Yet most parents of Jewish high school seniors were foreign-born and had had little formal education when compared to the Protestant parents. How evaluate this element in assaying "discrimination" against Jews?

Or—to take another example—it was found that many colleges showed a definite preference for applicants from their own state. A much higher proportion of Protestants than of either Jews or Catholics applied to out-of-state colleges in the Northeastern states. How important was this factor in reducing apparent discrimination against Jews and Catholics?

Theoretically, of course, there is a way around these difficulties. You isolate one factor after another, continually whittling down your sample, until finally you come up with the pure distillation of, say, Jewish seniors whose fathers and mothers were native-born college graduates, who applied to out-of-state colleges, who were ex-GI's in the highest fifth of their respective senior classes, and who were also leaders in extracurricular activities. Then, from this pure residue, you should be able to determine the incidence of discrimination against Jewish applicants. The practical difficulty, however, is that of your original sample of 10,000 seniors, by the time you complete your distillation you may be left with something like 26 cases of this type, a number that is, naturally, "statistically unreliable."

THE Roper people were not unaware of these problems. Indeed, ample verbal obeisance is made to them. The *Report* is filled with warnings against drawing unwarranted conclusions from "statistically unreliable" samples, against assuming that all the possible factors had been accounted for and correctly weighted, and against closing the door to the possibility of other interpretations of the data.

Yet these caveats, far from helping matters, actually confront the reader with a real dilemma. If he takes them seriously, he must then decide how to weight *them*, while knowing that whatever substance he does attach subtracts in equal measure from the weight of the original conclusions. But if he ignores these warnings, he opens himself to the charge of accepting part of the package in place of the whole.

A case in point is a conclusion, reached in

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the *Report,* on discrimination against Jewish seniors in the "big city" sample. It was found that there was a "statistically significant" difference between the admission rate of Jewish and non-Jewish seniors only with regard to top-fifth Jewish students with a high record of extracurricular activity who were native-born and whose parents were college graduates and members of the executive and professional classes. To account for this surprising fact the Roper *Report* suggests that "it is possible that they are the ones who have the temerity to apply to the colleges who do discriminate and thus acquire a low batting average, while the Jews with less qualifications content themselves with applying to colleges where discrimination does not take place." Perhaps—and perhaps not. In any case, this hypothesis has a tremendous bearing on the whole study. Yet the reader must fend for himself.

PERHAPS the most weighty criticism of this method of investigating discrimination has been provided by Professor Frank Shuttleworth of City College of New York. Professor Shuttleworth, who advises the predominantly Jewish students of City College on their future careers, was concerned lest they begin to think that their chances of getting into good colleges were worse than they actually were—and they already thought them bad enough. For almost three years he has been conducting what amounts to a running battle with the Roper study—a battle recorded in a hot and protracted correspondence between himself and the American Council on Education and, finally, two magazine articles from his pen.

The main point of Professor Shuttleworth's criticisms is that the *Report* has not proved what it says it has: namely, the existence of discrimination on the part of colleges against Jewish seniors in the Northeastern United States and in American big cities. Instead, he maintains that a correct analysis of the Roper data would show that Jews, far from being discriminated against, are given equal and perhaps even preferential treatment. Actually, Professor Shuttleworth does not believe that Jews are given preferential treatment. He believes that the Roper data must be incorrect.

In Shuttleworth's opinion, two major errors, plus a host of minor ones, are responsible for the erroneous Roper conclusions. The first major one is the failure to make allowance for the factor of multiple applications. Jewish seniors, it seems, are much more eager to get into college than their non-Jewish classmates, and the Jewish applicants average 2.2 applications each as contrasted to 1.3 applications for Protestants and 1.4 for Catholics. Put another way, only 22 per cent of Protestants applied to more than one college, as against 62 per cent of Jewish applicants.

As a result of this disparity between applicants and applications, it turns out that 87 per cent of Jewish *applicants* are accepted in some college compared to 88 per cent of Protestant and 81 per cent of Catholic, but that only 56 per cent of Jewish *applications* are accepted compared to 77 per cent of Protestant and 67 per cent of Catholic.

Professor Shuttleworth's point is that the Roper study wrongly stresses the relative unsuccess of Jewish *applications* and ignores the great success of Jewish *applicants.* To this, the Roper partisans reply that the colleges must necessarily treat each application as an individual, and that the action they take on applications is the best index of their attitude toward individuals. Professor Shuttleworth's rejoinder is that colleges know of the other applications that multiple applicants make, and of their order of preference among colleges, from the reports of the College Entrance Examination Board; and that almost invariably, colleges with enough well-qualified first-choice applications tend to give little consideration to second-, third-, or lower-choice applications. Thus any group that makes multiple applications would tend to show less success per application irrespective of discrimination.

Social scientists are not a tongue-tied group and the Roper people are not left at a loss by this last point. They wave their data sheets showing that 82 per cent of the *first-choice* applications of Protestants were accepted compared to 71 per cent of Catholic and 63 per cent of Jewish first-choice applications. Whereupon Shuttleworth answers with a table he has prepared based on the Roper data which shows that when Jewish and non-Jewish groups filing equal numbers of applications are matched in their respective academic quintiles, the Jews do as well or better in most quintiles than the non-Jews in getting into college. To this, the Roper partisans reply that comparing Jews and non-Jews by number of applications within quintiles is invalid because it neglects the possibility that Jews making only one application may do so because their academic stand-

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ing within the top quintile virtually assures them of acceptance anywhere. And Shuttleworth comes back with an analysis of the Roper data showing that such is not the case.

This gives in barest outline the differences between Professor Shuttleworth and the Roper people on just one point in their *Report*. Clearly, these things can get complicated.

SHUTTLEWORTH'S second major point is that the Roper figures are distorted by a failure to take into account the different admission rates of the colleges to which Jews and non-Jews apply. Thus the Roper data on the national sample show that in the upper quintile 66 per cent of Protestant applications to privately controlled colleges are accepted compared to 52 per cent of Jewish applications. However, Professor Shuttleworth points out, almost half the Protestant applications to privately controlled colleges are made to denominational schools which are known to have a very high acceptance rate, while over 90 per cent of the Jewish applications go to non-sectarian schools with a much lower rate of acceptance. He then proceeds to show that if the acceptance rate for denominational schools is assumed to be about 82 per cent and that for non-sectarian schools about 50 per cent (reasonable assumptions in the light of known admissions policies), the disparity between Protestant and Jewish acceptances is accounted for without involving discrimination at all.

This would appear to be a very telling point, but it is weakened somewhat by the fact that the Roper *Report* stresses that discrimination is most evident in colleges outside the home community of the applicant. And if applications to home-city schools are excluded, it turns out that the disparity between Protestant and Jewish success is not 66 per cent to 52 per cent but about 64 per cent to 30 per cent. *That* gap cannot be as easily explained away by Professor Shuttleworth's analysis.

There is no doubt that many of his criticisms are valid. But the more important question is not the validity of one or another of his points—verdicts over which statisticians can debate without end—but the fact that the Roper *Report* seems to lend itself so easily to this type of negative analysis. The reasons are not hard to find. Instead of going as directly as possible to the heart of the problem—discrimination—and trying to find out where it exists and how much of it there is, an attempt is made to deduce and distill it from a huge mass of data that is assumed to be relevant. And of course, it always turns out that some conceivably relevant data have been overlooked or wrongly weighted.

Ironically, the summary report and analysis of the Roper study issued by the American Council of Education itself makes the most melancholy admission of all when it states "we have seen that the samples used in this study have not been quite large enough to handle the complexity of the situation disclosed. The national picture is seriously obscured in the tabulations, by reason of the attempt to accommodate too many details."

In other words, what is required is a bigger, more complex study to account for absolutely all the details anybody can think of—and then we shall see what we have.

YET as Professor Shuttleworth himself points out, without however seeming to grasp the implications of his observation, far simpler and more effective studies of discrimination in college admissions have been made.

In 1946, for example, a study was done by David Berkowitz for a Legislative Commission on Discrimination in Higher Education in New York State. Mr. Berkowitz simply examined all the applications to fourteen liberal arts colleges in upstate New York. He found that five did not discriminate against Jewish applicants at all. Five others discriminated somewhat, accepting two qualified non-Jews to every Jew. The remaining four institutions discriminated sharply on a four-to-one ratio.

Although most Jewish applicants came from New York City, the possibility that what seemed like discrimination might simply be the normal workings of geographical preferences was excluded by an analysis which showed that upstate and out-of-state Jewish applicants were even less favored than those from New York City. A further analysis showed that academic standing could not be a factor since Jewish and non-Jewish applicants had virtually identical qualifications, on an average, in this respect.

Although Shuttleworth praises the Berkowitz study and contrasts it with the Roper *Report*, he criticizes it for failing to take two factors into account: multiple applications and preferences for children of alumni. These omissions, he believes, increased the amount of discrimination found by Berkowitz, although he agrees that even after making generous allow-

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ance for these factors the major conclusions of the Berkowitz study would hold.

Aside from Professor Shuttleworth's criticisms, which would appear to be valid, the great virtue of the Berkowitz study is that it tells us something we didn't know before about discrimination, namely how much there was in 1946 in upstate New York and where it existed. The great defect of the Roper study is that it obscures these facts instead of pin-pointing them. The only conclusion one seems justified in drawing from the latter is that in 1947, while there was undoubtedly discrimination in college admissions throughout the country, there was much less than most people had imagined—a conclusion inherently probable but not very helpful.

Every trade in every age has its special delusions, and a major affliction of social science today might be called the IBM fallacy. This delusion reflects the endemic conviction of 20th-century man that machines can do everything for him—including thinking. In the case of the social scientist it takes the form of a certainty that if you feed enough data through enough electric circuits what you are looking for is bound to come out. The corollary of this hypothesis is the conviction that only a minimum of human cerebration need be combined with a maximum of electronics to produce miraculous results.

But little fallacies survive and multiply in the shelter of big ones. The belief in the omnipotent machine is supported by the idea that the social sciences can attain the same exactitude as the natural sciences, with help of the statistician and his machine. This idea, in turn, depends on a mistaken notion of how data are used in the natural sciences. Like the movie cowboy who is almost never seen herding cattle, the physicist or chemist is too often pictured collecting or processing data amid a jungle of laboratory gadgets, and seldom in that crucial act of scientific creation—thinking. The laboratory experiment, or natural observation, which are analogous to the collection and processing of data in the social sciences, are simply ways of verifying the scientist's hypothesis. They cannot create a hypothesis, only confirm one. Where that hypothesis comes from, God may know, but certainly no one else does. Where it doesn't come from, however, is a machine or any specific body of data. If it did, scientific creation would be possible for almost any high school boy.

MR. BERKOWITZ was lucky. His hypothesis, the existence of discrimination, was given to him. All he had to do was to prove it in the simplest way possible. The Roper people, although primarily interested in discrimination, were grimly determined to study all "factors affecting the admission of high school seniors to college." The result: 300 pages of tables in which the fact and the nature of discrimination are virtually buried. Instead of giving the undoubtedly true picture of many white spots interspersed with a few black ones concentrated in those states where the Jewish population is large, a kind of pale gray emerges in which the significant details are muted.

Yet there is a strange paradox about the Roper *Report*. While it does not contribute too much to its objective, which is reliable knowledge about discrimination, it does, by the sheer magic of accumulated information, permit various pictures to emerge of American high school seniors and their parents that are a valuable contribution to contemporary sociology.

For example, the Roper data strikingly confirms the widely held picture of a native white Protestant upper class, a Jewish middle class and a Catholic lower class. The Protestant seniors came from the best-educated and best-established families economically, with 68 per cent of their fathers in the business and executive classes. Almost half of these were in the very top occupational and income scale. Thirty-eight per cent of the Protestant fathers had been to college as had almost one-third of the Protestant mothers. And 78 per cent of the Protestant parents were native-born.

In comparison with the Protestants, the families of the Catholic seniors were grossly underprivileged. Only 17 per cent of the Catholic fathers and 9 per cent of their wives had been to college. One-fourth of the fathers were factory workers, while 18 per cent were in the service trades and 22 per cent had white-collar jobs. The Catholics also showed a surprisingly high percentage of foreign-born parents. In only 58 per cent of the Catholic cases were both parents native-born; and more than half the foreign-born Catholics came from Ireland or Italy.

In education and income, Jews held an intermediary position. While 69 per cent of the Jewish fathers were in business or the professions, compared with 68 per cent of the Protestants, more than half of the Jewish businesses were small. And the Jewish parents were

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only slightly better educated than the Catholics. Only 22 per cent of the fathers and 12 per cent of the mothers had gone beyond high school. Here, however, one of those complicating factors that make life miserable for social scientists intervenes. A very large proportion of Jewish seniors (more than twice as many as Catholics and Protestants) were unable to answer the question about their parents' education. This uncertainty, as Roper points out, was probably due to their unfamiliarity with European education and their inability to equate it with American standards. For the single most striking characteristic of Jewish seniors is the fact that only one-quarter of them had two native-born parents. And three-quarters of the Jewish foreign-born parents came from Russia, Poland, or one of the Baltic states, none of which was particularly celebrated for the educational opportunities offered Jews.

The data also confirm the powerful influence of family background on educational incentive and opportunity. Of the seniors, almost three-quarters of the children of professional men and executives applied to college, compared with less than one-quarter of those whose parents were factory workers. Family had a similar influence on quintile rating. Thirty-five per cent of the children from professional and executive families made the top quintile of their senior class, while only 16 per cent of the factory workers' children did.

How do the attitudes, abilities, and ambitions of Jewish seniors compare with those of their classmates? In some respects the differences are striking, in others less than might be expected.

For example, if desire to go to college is any index, Jewish seniors are far more ambitious than their classmates. More than two-thirds of the Jewish seniors apply to college compared with slightly more than one-third of the Protestants and one-fourth of the Catholics. And, as we have seen above, once having decided to go to college, Jews file almost twice as many applications as do their non-Jewish classmates.

Jewish seniors also think more about the future, apparently. Thus, 93 per cent of the Jewish males named a specific career they had in mind compared with 90 per cent of the Catholics and 87 per cent of the Protestants. In three particular careers the difference in choice is significant. Engineering is chosen by more than 22 per cent of the non-Jews, less than 9 per cent of the Jews. Business, on the other hand, is chosen by almost 26 per cent of the Jewish seniors, compared to 14 per cent of the non-Jews. Medicine is chosen by 19 per cent of the Jews in contrast with less than 9 per cent of the non-Jews.

Some interesting differences appear also in extracurricular activities. Jews are more interested in student government, with 47 per cent having held school office compared to 32 per cent of non-Jews. But they are much poorer athletes, less than 35 per cent having been on a school team, compared with 60 per cent of the Protestant and 55 per cent of the Catholic seniors.

As to scholarship—there's the big surprise. Jews are not as smart as they—and perhaps others—think they are. We have seen that the Berkowitz study of discrimination in New York State disclosed little difference in quintile grouping between Jews and non-Jews in New York. Roper's national study does show a greater spread but it is not very great: 28:6 per cent of the Jewish seniors were in the top quintile of their class compared with 21.8 per cent of the Protestants and 18.5 per cent of the Catholics. It is possible, of course, that if the high schools were weighted by some yardstick such as College Entrance Examination records, the spread might be greater, for the high schools in middle-class urban neighborhoods, where most of the Jewish seniors were concentrated, tend to have somewhat higher standards.

One point above all emerges from the Berkowitz study. Every time an intelligent reporter like Samuel Lubell or a skilled investigator like Roper pokes into the myth of American uniformity, either in its radical, disenchanted version that shows us as robots in a mass-production civilization, or in its liberal, patriotic variant according to which we are as alike as peas in a pod despite differences of race, religion, etc., what is revealed is the most amazing diversity of attitudes and cultures, inhabiting as it were separate worlds and indicating an astonishing variegation in American life.

This variegation imposes an automatic caveat on the social scientist. The simpler and more direct the techniques and the surer the initial hypothesis, the greater the chances of success. Perhaps the miracle of the Roper *Report* is that, ignoring these precautions, and using an intricate mechanical approach to the problem of discrimination, it managed to uncover so much useful material about American life.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Is There a West German Menace?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I think that Hal Lehrman has misread my book, *The Return of Germany: A Tale of Two Countries,* which he reviewed in COMMENTARY (April 1953). Since I greatly respect Lehrman as a conscientious and able colleague, and since the issues involved in his review transcend by far the interest in my book alone, I should like to set the record straight—at least on a few fundamental questions.

Lehrman says that I found "the Germans very often right and the West nearly always wrong." This is most misleading. I tried to report, and to make understandable, the temper and the facts of present-day Germany. I had to refer to many actions of early American occupation policy which—in German eyes—were "wrong," and left their impact. Often, in my own judgment, such measures were in fact "wrong," and indeed many have since been abandoned because there remained few doubts about their "wrongness." But Lehrman censures me for something quite different from this: my "general tendency," he writes, "is to absolve Germans in the mass as 'unpolitical,' blame the Americans for many of the German failings, and explain away certain German aberrations which are not so easily dismissible." I did none of these things.

It is true that I explained many seemingly puzzling German attitudes by a generalization about the prevalent "unpolitical" pattern of thought and behavior, with its passivity, lack of responsibility, and absence of those qualities of initiative, participation, and independence that mark citizenship in truly democratic countries. But I considered it my task to marshal the facts and leave it to my readers to draw up their own moral balance sheets. What I also did—explicitly in four chapters, *passim* throughout the book—was to explain the *very unsound* political and social *consequences* of this "unpolitical" attitude. Far from absolving the Germans because of their "unpolitical" attitude, I stressed the basic irresponsibility and political immaturity which underly it.

Nor did I "blame the Americans for many of the German failings." Repeatedly, I reported how and why many Germans blame America and presented *their* arguments, which, I thought, should be of some interest to American readers. But after this I went on to explain (p. 217ff., p. 294) that German blame of Americans was mostly alibis and rationalizations. . . .

The trauma inflicted by the Nazi Reich was so deep that many non-Germans, including many genuinely fair-minded individuals like Lehrman, feel almost a compulsion to see its horrifying specter loom on the horizon once again. "To be fair," Lehrman introduces his criticisms of my book, "it must be said that Muhlen's book is primarily not about the West German menace but 'a tale of two countries'—the two current Germanies." Why does Lehrman seem to feel that the fact that a book on Germany is not only a book on the "West German menace," but also deals with East Germany, needs explaining? Suppose a book on America by a modern Tocqueville were reviewed with the "fair," apologetic introduction that it is *not,* say, about "American materialism," nor about "the Wall Street paradise." Must a serious reporter continue to focus on fearsome, hostile stereotypes in the minds of his readers and critics, or is it not rather his duty to face and tackle the more complicated, more interesting realities as he found them? If I did not write a book about "the West German menace," it was for the simple reason that I found many more factors militating against such a potential menace than supporting it—while, at the same time, I found a clear and present menace in the Soviet power which controls East Germany.

I SHARE with Lehrman, and with my other American as well as German friends, the conviction that we must watch with particular vigilance for signs of a re-emerging totalitarian menace in West Germany. (To stress this should be superfluous for one who fought Nazism in action for ten years—at times and places where this was, to say the least, far from being popular. . . .) I can see in West Germany little more than a few sporadic evidences of residual Nazism, and little politically organized anti-Semitic neo-Nazism with present strength or popular attractive power—in short, nothing that could be termed a "menace."

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I believe my conclusions are justified by the facts. My reviewer does not; and thinks fit to cast doubt on the correctness of my facts. Unfortunately I don't have the space to answer in full all the questions he raises. When I talked to German audiences about America, and was inevitably asked, in three words, "And the lynchings?" it always took me several minutes to explain (not to "explain away") the facts and their meaning. Similarly with the kind of questions Lehrman asks in his review.

"And the recent arrests of sub-Fuehrers?" Lehrman asks, casting doubt on my view that present neo-Nazism seems destined to failure. There have also been recent arrests of a larger number of Communist conspirators in West Germany—yet nobody considered this as a danger signal that West Germany was going Communist.

"And the sub-rosa Nazi proclivities of the FDP and the open pro-fascism of the DP?" (two West German right-of-center parties) asks Lehrman. The DP—which polled 4 per cent of the vote in 1949, and does not seem to have increased its following since—cannot be called pro-fascist if we judge it by its political program and record rather than occasional oratorical phrases in an election speech. Messrs. Seebohm, Hellwege, and Muhlenfeld, the leaders of that party, are ultra-conservative reactionaries whose anti-Marxist and monarchist views hark back to the era of Bismarck; they expelled all the genuine pro-Nazis (in North Rhine-Westphalia where the DP stands for the reestablishment of the Guelphish, pre-Hohenzollern rulers, and in Schleswig-Holstein), and voted for the Israel Reparations Treaty, the Western defense pacts, the other post-Nazi pro-Western commitments. It is even more mistaken or unfair to charge the FDP with "pro-Nazi proclivities." That party is a strange amalgam of old-fashioned, strongly anti-Nazi liberals (such as Federal President Theodor Heuss, and Minister-President Reinhold Maier), and of conservative, sometimes reactionary rightists. They try to win former Nazi party members for their party, as do all the other German parties, though the latter admit to it less openly, considering that it is better to commit them to the democratic cause rather than turn them into a dangerous enclave of permanent outcasts. To call the FDP "pro-Nazi" is to commit the old error of confusing rightists with revolutionary totalitarians, a very different breed altogether.

And the infiltration of secret Nazi faithfuls into these parties, Lehrman asks? Undoubtedly a few have tried to infiltrate. Yet the same people who fairly object to calling "Communist" those American parties, churches, civil liberties groups, and unions in which a few secret Communists have infiltrated without conquering them, seem to have no scruples about calling those German parties "Nazi" in which the same thing has happened.

What about the Nazis in the Bonn Foreign Office? When the government was charged with sheltering a large number of them, Chancellor Adenauer ordered an investigation. Those who had actively been connected with Nazi crimes, and had succeeded in hiding their dark record during the turbulent postwar years, were immediately dismissed. Those of whose sincere conversion to the new ideas the Chancellor had personally convinced himself (as he assured me at the time) were kept in office.

LEHRMAN'S criticism of my report on anti-Semitism in Germany today is mainly concerned with the Auerbach case—which I described with intentional terseness. That the man who had him arrested "had a good anti-Nazi record"—Lehrman's words for my report that he was sentenced to death by a Nazi People's Court for his anti-Nazi activities—seems rather relevant in the light of the question whether Auerbach was a victim of neo-Nazi anti-Semitic persecution. On the other hand, the correct handling of the case by the judges was acknowledged by the defendants' lawyers themselves. It is true that, as Lehrman says, "one of the chief prosecution witnesses has since been jailed for perjury," but the case in which he perjured himself had nothing at all to do with the Auerbach case, and was tried only *after* Auerbach was dead. The state prosecutor declared that if he had known beforehand about it, he would not have used the witness, whose general credibility would have been impaired; but it does not seem likely that a different verdict would have been reached. Schumacher, who died exactly four days later, did not "express his horror over the case" to Auerbach's widow, as Lehrman states; what he did was to send a message of condolence to the widow of the man who had been a member of his party. In the public statement in which he, like other German politicians, expresses his regret concerning the suicide, he wrote that Auerbach "might well have transgressed the limits of the law" (*"die Grenze des Erlaubten gestreift"*). Although the full history of the Auerbach case will probably never be written, Lehrman's questions cannot change the conclusion reached in my book that Auerbach was not a victim of anti-Semitic persecution.

It seems a distressing paradox that many people outside of Germany consider it lack of sympathy with the Jewish victims of the Nazi crime if one reports and documents (as I did)

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that pogromism and extermination was the terror rule of a totalitarian minority, and that the Nazi doctrine of racial hatred failed to leave a lasting impact on the German mind. In fact, any reporter who fails to report, because he fails to find, the signs of German anti-Semitism which people abroad expect him to see, runs the risk of having himself suspected of lack of sympathy for the Jews—or even of anti-Semitism.

Lehrman writes of "the German desire 'to see as few Jews as possible in our universities.'" I do not doubt that some German voiced such a desire, and that there are quite a few thousand crackpots, fanatics, hate-consumed people in Germany today who agree with him. However, this hardly makes it "the German desire," since Jewish students and professors are sincerely encouraged to come to West German universities, and since, according to all the evidence available, there is today less anti-Semitism in West German universities than there has been for decades. . . .

Does not Lehrman's review boil down to his dislike of the fact that my book deals factually with *present-day* Germany, rather than concentrating once more on condemning *yesterday's* Germany, and speculating on the potential menace of *tomorrow's* Germany?

We cannot hope for a stable, free democratic Germany if we see her primarily in fearsome stereotypes based on the crimes of the Nazi regime; by treating the German nation as a permanently unregenerate criminal, we abort the real possibilities of regeneration. Are not "stringent measures" of tutelage and control based on uninformed suspicion less prudent, less persuasive, and less safe than an attitude of realistic understanding and (if I may use that much maligned term) brotherhood?

NORBERT MUHLEN

New York City

Mr. Lehrman Replies

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

One recent convivial afternoon Miss Freda Utley, who finds Mr. Muhlen's book flawless and, as is well known, writes, speaks, and testifies with passionate restraint, said about this reviewer: "Oh, *him!* He *always* kills a book unless it screams bloody murder against the Germans!" A characteristically moderate judgment. Apart from Mr. Muhlen's study, I have reviewed a grand total of four books on Germany, all favorably except one, which I "killed" precisely *because* it screamed "bloody murder against the Germans."

I drag Miss Utley and myself in here not because it was Mr. Muhlen she happened to be comforting at the moment, but because she and he, as his letter reveals, share a typical serene benevolence toward those who try to look at Germany whole. It appears that I, along with many other "non-Germans," suffer from a "trauma" induced by the Nazis, that we "feel almost a compulsion" to look under beds for them, and that we are blinded by "fearsome, hostile stereotypes." In the same breath, Mr. Muhlen compliments me on being a "genuinely fair-minded individual," a colleague "conscientious and able." Now, really, how can both these estimates be true? Is it perhaps that Mr. Muhlen thinks me "fair-minded" when I write about Hungary, Bulgaria, Egypt, or Israel, where he agrees with me, but thinks me ridden with bogies when I write about Germany, where he does not agree with me?

I must go on being personal about this because essentially the argument between us is one of personal attitude. So let me say that before opening Mr. Muhlen's book I expected to be able to praise it. I thought so because I had read his articles on Germany in this magazine. They showed a novel, refreshing balance on a subject clouded by hatred. They duly noted the seamy aspects of present-day Germany but also affirmed the existence of democratic elements—in defiance of the all-out Germanophobes, whose extremism I deplore as much as Mr. Muhlen does. I was confident that any book by him on Germany would also be helpful for those readers whom Mr. Muhlen and I should want to persuade—those who neither condemn nor acquit, feeling the desperate need for a German democracy and yet knowing the obstacles before it.

Unhappily, in his book Mr. Muhlen has lost the admirable balance of his COMMENTARY articles, and in fact leans over so far that he is nearly flat on his back, to prove there is little really to worry about in West Germany except the possibility of future American bungling. The gaps in his analysis of the *German* threats to German democracy—and to European security—are so vast and obvious that many who might have been instructed will be repelled. His book can influence few except those already persuaded. That is why, as a "colleague" emphatically believing with him that Germany may yet rise fair and free, I felt obliged to report that he had missed his great occasion by failing to tell the *full* story.

Mr. Muhlen's letter is almost as long as my review (which discussed two other books as well). It would be too much to attempt a labored rebuttal of each labored point, with counter-quotes for his quotes. I am sure Mr. Muhlen will not object if I urge readers instead to decide between us by consulting his

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book directly. I would only single out some matters here which illustrate what I think are his sins of evasion or omission.

Mr. Muhlen seems to measure the "Nazi" threat by proportion of electoral votes. Since when does numerical strength indicate the real potential of a totalitarian party? Were the Communists a majority in Russia or in any other country where they now dominate? Or, for that matter, were the Hitlerites before 1933?

Mr. Muhlen pooh-poohs neo-Nazi activities. His book at least should have mentioned these activities. Didn't he know about Werner Naumann, for instance, whose conspiracy is today being taken quite seriously (not only by the New York *Times*, which Mr. Muhlen has lately cudgeled as also suffering from trauma, but by Chancellor Adenauer, too, and even the FDP)? And if there are neo-Nazis in various major parties (whom the parties are throwing out to attract the liberal-labor vote in advance of the elections), why didn't Mr. Muhlen's book say so?

Is "sporadic . . . residual Nazism" the only "totalitarian menace"? Are there no other authoritarian reactionaries on the loose in Mr. Muhlen's Germany? Have the ultra-nationalists, the Junkers, the diehard General Staff types all faded away? I do not yield to Mr. Muhlen in concern over the "overwhelmingly large menace" of the Soviets in East Germany and other places. By all means expose, as Mr. Muhlen skillfully does, the threat to our security in East Germany. But how about the possibility of also getting kicked in the teeth by West Germany, which has three times the population and a rapidly expanding North Rhine-Westphalia heavy industry—the arsenal of earlier German adventures?

Are the increasing intimacies of Rhineland industrialists with East German and Russian Communists not even worth a reference? Are the shipments in strategic and critical materials, or the links between the military on both sides of the demarcation line, to be totally ignored? And do the "realities of today" truly have nothing to do with "yesterday's Germany"—the Germany of Rapallo, of the Soviet-Nazi pact, of Red Army-Reichswehr-Wehrmacht collaboration—or with "tomorrow's Germany"? The troublesome "potentials" agitate British and American military intelligence files considerably more than they seem to disturb the calm in Mr. Muhlen's library. The past does not necessarily tyrannize the future. But to deny that there is any connection—in this case a connection made firm by numerous current events—is to spin a rather quaint philosophy of history.

HAL LEHRMAN

New York City

The Archdeacon Objects

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am grateful to you for sending me the January 1953 edition of your COMMENTARY if only for the fact that it gives me the opportunity of wholly disclaiming the statement attributed to me in C. Berkeley Cooke's somewhat muddled article on "Doing Business the Iraqi Way." I wish to state publicly that I did not make the monstrous statement attributed to me or any other similar statement.

My work brings me into touch but seldom with Iraqi businessmen, but the few that I do know in this progressive country have my admiration and deepest respect and I am both happy and honoured to number them among my friends.

Will you please publish this in your next available issue.

C. V. ROBERTS
Archdeacon in Iraq and
Eastern Arabia

Bagdad, Iraq

Mr. Cooke Answers

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Below please find a copy of the reply that I sent directly to Archdeacon Cyril V. Roberts of St. George's Episcopal Church in Bagdad, Iraq.

"My Dear Archdeacon Roberts:

"It is proverbial that our British brothers can never understand American humor. But I am sorry that you were apparently so disturbed by the quotation attributed to you in my Bagdad article in the January COMMENTARY.

"Obviously, the word of an archdeacon will be universally accepted against that of a mere Wall Street businessman. Therefore all I can do is to 'turn the other cheek.'

"However, I would like to add, my dear friend, that it can be construed as a very great compliment to me if your denial carries the inference that I might have such a fantastic imagination as to have been able to *create* that rare and priceless little story about the Moslem character purely from fiction!"

C. BERKELEY COOKE, JR.

Watch Hill, Rhode Island

Correction

WE regret that the name of Mr. Franz Kobler, editor of *A Treasury of Jewish Letters*, was incorrectly given as "Kohler" in the preface to Maimonides' "Letter to His Translator" (April 1953).—ED.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Ideologue in the Middle

SHAME AND GLORY OF THE INTELLECTUALS. By PETER VIERECK. Beacon Press. 320 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by ROBERT GORHAM DAVIS

MR. VIERECK'S indispensable book might also be subtitled: "The Cold War Debater's Manual," or "Guide to Correct Thinking on All Fundamental Questions." It takes its pattern from the polarities, the recurrent contraries of contemporary intellectual debate, wherever this debate is influenced by, or exacerbated by, the all-embracing polarity of West against East. With an enormous and sustained brilliance, *Shame and Glory of the Intellectuals* puts clichés, abstractions, labels, romanticizations, favorite metaphors, and semantic pieties of all kinds to the hard test of historic fact and historic consequences.

Peter Viereck can do this, because he always seems to know more facts and have a keener sense of relevance than those whose arguments he is examining. How many admirers of Thomas Paine, for instance, know that he got himself involved with Napoleon in such a way that he had not only to approve but even help plan a Napoleonic invasion of the British Islands? Or if they know this do they see its implications? Mr. Viereck keeps returning with brutal emphasis to facts which his opponents seem conveniently able to forget. "Whatever spoils our arguments doesn't exist . . . witches don't exist. By definition, all witch-hunts hunt the non-existent. This means Fuchs, Coplon, Greenglass, and Hiss never existed. What does not exist, cannot be guilty, so why all the national hysteria?"

Mr. Viereck suffers no such amnesia. Fuchs and Hiss turn up very often in his book, even oftener than Burke and Metternich. He knows that Communism does not represent individual opinion, but "armed opinion," in Pitt's phrase, that Communists in the United States are few in number, but have two hundred divisions behind them. Lives mean something to him, and he thinks constantly of Katyn and Belsen, of all the deviationists in Russia who ended with a bullet through the back of their necks, of all those killed in the Hindu-Moslem riots after the British imperialists voluntarily withdrew from India, and of the numbers killed in Korea—and why. "We dawdled and disarmed, Muniched and Yalta'd, and used our vast steel production for TV sets while the long fuse was sputtering from Moscow."

Mr. Viereck is very good on European and Asian neutralism and the way in which American intellectuals have contributed to it. He knows that the Chinese Communists killed a million and a half of their own people to put down "reactionary landlord feudalism." He also knows that the feudal landlord system was much stronger in Japan, and that MacArthur ended it with no bloodshed and almost no notice from Western intellectuals. Such facts are given with complete specificity, the proportion of land in Japan, for instance, now owned by individual farmers, or the areas and populations which the Communists have taken by force since 1939. Men's opinions are stated in their own most revealing words.

MR. VIERECK, however, defines polarities not so much to argue them as to transcend them. Like Koestler before him in *The Yogi and the Commissar,* he is fascinated by what the semanticists call two-valued orientations, even though he is determined not to be trapped by them. There are Scyllas and Charybdises, rocks and whirlpools in every direction: relativism versus absolutism, Professor Universalia-post-rem versus Saint Universalia-ante-rem, the *Nation*-ite mentality versus the McCarthyite mentality, original sin versus the natural goodness of man. We can accept neither T. S. Eliot's *Idea of a Christian Society* nor John Dewey's idea of a progressive society. We must avoid paranoiac exaggerations of Stalinist infiltration and schizophrenic denials of its existence. Loose accusations against liberal teachers are bad, but so are loose exonerations of Communist

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teachers. A preventive war now against Russia would be insane, but the possibility of peaceful coexistence is an illusion and a heartless one to boot. It is no good rejecting the creeping socialism of blueprint-intoxicated statists simply to fall into the "creeping anarchism of the Old Guard Jacobins of *laissez-faire*."

Often these opposites complement each other. "The *Nation* mentality and the McCarthy mentality need each other, feed on each other, and are both wrong." "The pragmatist justifies pragmatism spiritually, the religious believer justifies religion pragmatically." Often these complementary opposites are found to be the components of particular arguments. William Buckley's *God and Man at Yale,* for instance, combines "out-group, under-dog" educational ideas, with "in-group, top-dog" economics. American supporters of the Communist united front combined a "transcendentalism" of ends with a "pragmatism" of means. This love of opposites and reversals gives a certain euphuistic cast to the style, as in the observation that the British Labor government "afflicted the comfortable" more than it "comforted the afflicted." Most of the phrasing is very witty, however. Mr. Viereck follows Nietzsche in believing that Joyful Wisdom, golden laughter, is the highest seriousness.

Because of the dialectic nature of *Shame and Glory,* ideas are habitually defined by their opposites. The Communists, for example, are now less influential among intellectuals than the "anti-anti-Communists." And in opposition to the latter it is necessary to be "anti-anti-Catholic." One must know which baiters to bait.

Mr. Viereck does not debate with Communists or Nazis, with the "bloody-minded professors" attracted by totalitarianism, lusting for power, and using ideas purely instrumentally, cynically, "pragmatically." He has nearly as much contempt for what he calls the Gaylord Babbitt, Jr., type, whose conversation is an impossible and irresponsible mélange of all the "advanced" clichés, both political and cultural. But he respects any intellectuals who are genuinely concerned with ideas, who sincerely seek the true and good. When they are in opposition, he feels it must be an opposition of partial truths mixed with errors. What is necessary, then, is not to choose one side or the other, but to get the best of both and the worst of neither. It is the method not of the Vital Center but of the Vital Apex.

IN PRACTICE this highest truth is determined by the world situation, by the necessities of the struggle against Communism. Which will help us most, logical positivism or a belief in absolute values? Since the situation is the same for everyone except a Communist, so far as ultimate interests are concerned, the correct line is necessarily the same for everyone. Wrong metaphysics can lose us the battle as readily as wrong military decisions, in a continuing crisis "where every slightest political act may become an unshirkable responsibility of infinite moral significance." This Higher Pragmatism is not really so very different from the official Russian Communist "reflection-of-reality" concept of truth. "Now listen carefully, you logical positivists, you progressive educators," Mr. Viereck exclaims at one point, "this is the Katyn-Belsen decade; it matters to us deeper than tears whether our civilization lives or dies." Such warnings could have totalitarian implications if Mr. Viereck were not himself so ardent a libertarian, and did not understand so thoroughly in most specific instances that we cannot defeat totalitarianism by adopting the methods of totalitarianism. Nevertheless, Mr. Viereck uses very frequently such phrases as "you must believe" and "you must prefer."

If the urgencies of the present situation seem, in *Shame and Glory,* to play a disproportionate part in determining the rightness even of fundamental religious and philosophical ideas, it is because the brilliant dialectics and perceptive wisdom of *Shame and Glory* are not very firmly grounded religiously or philosophically. Mr. Viereck is troubled about the relation of moral absolutes and decent values to Platonic ideas and what he calls "innate universals." He is very candid about his unfamiliarity with technical philosophic distinctions and his own open-mindedness on the most cardinal religious questions. He gives the impression, however, that these questions could be solved logically as he solves the other polar problems in his book, if only he had the technical training.

In other words, Mr. Viereck's response to the problem is ideological, whereas his own great talents as a poet and his sympathy with the great conservative tradition should send him in quite another direction. On the title page of his *Grammar of Assent,* which is a study of the nature of affirmation, Cardinal Newman put a quotation from Saint Ambrose pointing out that it was *"non in dialectica"*

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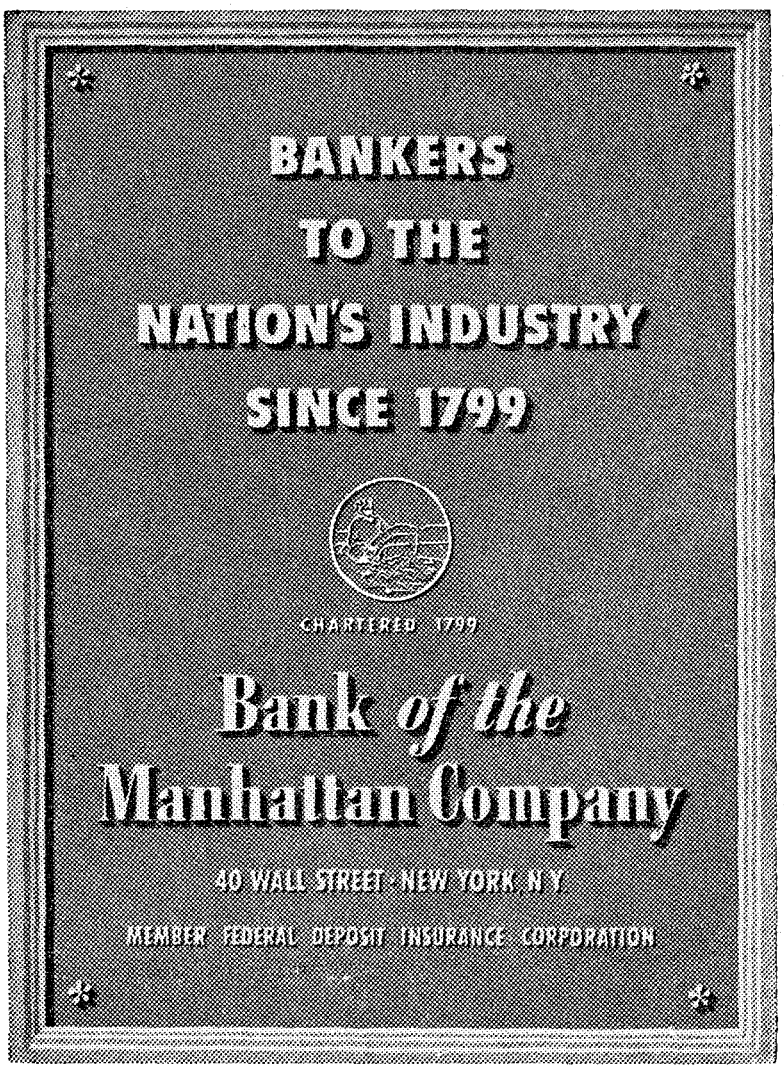

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that God was pleased to save us. Those values to whose rediscovery *Shame and Glory* is devoted are not rationally determined, though logic is important in appreciating and reconciling them. As Mr. Viereck uses the term "values," it refers to those moral, loving identifications with persons, families, places, institutions, traditions, and rituals which unite the individual and the group, the present and past, the conscious and unconscious, and make up most of our selfhood. They are not innate, but since they can be experienced, one does not have to be a Platonist or scholastic realist in order to believe in them. These identifications or commitments or assents in which the imagination, intelligence, and emotions all play a part have been better understood by conservatives like Burke, Coleridge, and Newman, than by reformers and progressives like Bentham and Dewey. Since they are relations of particulars to particulars, they cannot be captured by logical formulae, which is why conservatives have always been impatient with ideologues. The values in such identifications are best discovered or revealed by historians and poets. Mr. Viereck is both, but in the present book he prefers the guise of ideologue and dialectician, though it is far less suitable to the conservative who is rediscovering values.

Since the persons and institutions with which we identify ourselves are concrete and real, they contain inseparable mixtures of good and evil. And since as concrete individuals we have complex relations with the world outside, conflicts of loyalty are bound to arise, conflicts at once inner and outer, which require tragic choices. These tragic choices cannot be obviated by abstracting out what is right on both sides and making a new synthesis from it dialectically. Nor simply by invoking, as Mr. Viereck so frequently does, the whole of the Greek-Jewish-Christian tradition, with its welter of contradictory values and imperatives.

The individual defines himself as a person by the choices he makes in morally contradictory situations. As soon as we think in these existential terms, we realize that Mr. Viereck's book is about intellectuals, but contains no persons, even though it talks a good deal in general terms about dignity of souls and the integrity of the individual. Because there are no persons, ideas are given a disproportionate role but at the same time put in too simple a relationship to the encompassing political circumstances. There are innumerable names, but they are named as carriers of ideas which can be considered apart from those who carry them. Those named most often, like Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Hitler, and Hiss, are those whose ethical personalities are subordinated completely to their ideologies or historic ambitions. Gaylord Babbitt, Jr., the most fully described character in the book, does not exist at all, but is simply a pastiche of everything Mr. Viereck dislikes. On the other hand, the whole Christian existentialist tradition of Kierkegaard, Berdyaev, Tillich, and the rest, is completely ignored.

If Mr. Viereck were simply a brilliant intellectual with a keen, urgent sense of the present historical situation, there would be no point in raising these philosophical questions or objecting to his dialectical simplifications. But Mr. Viereck shows in his poetry that he has imagination, that he is a person with a profound sense of the depths and contradictions of living experience. There is no reason, therefore, why he should not discover values instead of arguing the necessity of them, and why he should not stop presenting his new conservatism as an ideology in imitation of what it opposes, and make it a genuine conservatism by rooting it in the rich soil of love and understanding which his poetry shows is already prepared for it.

Freedom's Deadly Fruit

In the Morning Light. By Charles Angoff. Beechhurst. 736 pp. $4.50.

Reviewed by Sylvia Rothchild

In the Morning Light is the second of Charles Angoff's books about the Polansky family, immigrants from a small village in Russia who settled in Boston. It contains the reminiscences of David Polansky, the answer to his five-year-old daughter's question, "Is it hard to grow up?" The book covers only four years of David's life, from his Bar Mitzvah to his high school graduation, but it contains glimpses of his numerous relations, descriptions of Jewish life in Boston during the First World War, and it purports to be a serious study of the adjustment of East European immigrants.

It is a pity that the sentimentality and awkwardness of the writing often obscure the natures of the main characters. One feels that the author knows more than he tells. There is

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a great deal of compassion and insight hidden behind the descriptions of people who are "good in every sense of the word." Too often, however, the meaning of worthwhile passages is lost because of the trite expressions that make it difficult to take what is written seriously.

The older women get the best and most sensitive treatment. The men are more real when angry than when they are kind. The children and young people are as flat and real as paper dolls. The Polanskys are very ordinary people living commonplace lives. They are not challenged with any passions that would force them to transcend their pettiness. Instead of forcing them to become alive under pressure, Angoff tends to glorify their small virtues, making the book an apology for the manners and customs of poor Jews.

There are only good and gentle people in the Polansky family. There may occasionally be foolish ones, but never wicked ones. How else could they be, when the *"alte Bobbe,"* who bore them, was a paragon of virtue? When they are not worthy of her, the blame is never theirs, but America's. The characters and author constantly extol America, but at the same time, almost in the same breath, they blame their undoing upon this same America. A great deal of the story is devoted to this ambivalence. The moral of the Jewish expulsion from the Eden of poverty and piety, however, prevails as the stronger feeling. America is the snake and money is the apple. Although such feelings *are* expressed by immigrants, the author attempts not only to express them, but to prove they are valid. Money separated husband from wife and brother from brother, though poverty and strangeness in a new land had kept them together. To prove this, the characters in the beginning of the story are unbelievably sweet and forgiving. If they are pricked, they do not bleed. Nothing jars them from their acceptance of the will of God. Within a few short years, however, their lives are full of hatred, resentment, and humiliation, all attributed to America, which has wounded them with its false values.

THERE are two villains in the book, business and the enticement of the *"goyishke"* way of life. There are only a few Christians in the book, but they carry the full weight of Christian failings, just as the Polanskys and their friends are encumbered by Jewish goodness. They are, however, never guilty of anti-Semitism, because they are all "good *goyim*" who love Jews.

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David's relations with four non-Jewish boys are symbolic of his attempts at emancipation. The first is Frank, who frightens David at first, but eventually wins his pity when it becomes plain that Frank's father has no use for "educated fools" and will not let his son go to college. The second, Willie, is a tough who for some mysterious reason babies and protects David from the gang. Willie joins the Marines at the age of fifteen, somehow gets to Mexico, and is killed in a skirmish with Villa. Jerry, his third friend, goes up in an airplane, which David wants to do, but doesn't dare to because his mother would not approve. The plane, of course, crashes. From his fourth friend, Stan, he learns about sex, enough to decide that Jewish sex is spiritual and Christian sex vulgar. David's need for vicarious experience finally leads him to seek out a Jewish family that has assimilated faster than his own. The father does calisthenics with his sons and takes them to baseball games. The mother smokes. Solly drinks water instead of seltzer; Joe goes to prize fights; Sam chews gum. In a few years they come to their natural ends. The father goes to the state penitentiary for selling narcotics, the sons are expelled from school for cheating. David's un-

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happy experience with these people serves to bring him home to the arms and values of his parents.

THE Polansky family includes a large number of Jewish types. There is the rich crass uncle Mottel and his wife Bassel who is bored by affluence and longs for the old days when she worked night and day in a candy store. Aryeh is a Hebrew teacher who goes to night school for many years to study chemistry and finds at the end that he dislikes chemistry and prefers to teach Hebrew. Yetta is the lady socialist who marries someone who is her intellectual inferior, bears children, and becomes wealthy, never mentioning socialism again. Intellectual activity in women is seen as a kind of disease. They either lose their brains along with their pince-nez after marriage, or turn over their only loves to rivals and lose them. Aaron is known as the silent one. He has a predilection for older women, and does not marry until he finds a young one fat and aggressive enough to mother him. All we know of her is that she loves trees and flowers, drinks copious quantities of orange juice, and takes cold baths. Probably the most obnoxious character is Harrele-mit-the-pants, the atheist, who misquotes Schopenhauer and wears only pants and shirts which are too large for him. He dies young, exhorting David to love science. Since Aryeh has already explored the world of science at Tufts Night School, and found it empty of inspiration, an important Jewish lesson is taught.

If these were just background characters seen through a young boy's eyes, their incompleteness might be forgiven, but they are the result of the narrator's experience, used to justify his ideas of Jewish values; as such they are often unbearable.

Though too many characters come forth like vaudeville actors to make their speeches or put on acts, without revealing themselves except by accident, the large number of characters, taken together, do suggest the family patterns and the immigrant pattern of development. There are long speeches delivered by the doctor, the pharmacist, the Yankee, that could not have been spoken, but are informative, nevertheless. The businesses, unions, and stores, though sometimes superficially described, are all there to examine. The total provides a study of Jewish conceptions, misconceptions, and prejudices, even though its goal is to substantiate rather than expose the prejudices.

The use of Yiddish in the book is often unfortunate. Though it could add flavor when the words cannot be easily translated into English, or even if it is to appeal to those who "know," the use of as many rather than as few Yiddish words as possible is awkward and disturbing. The translations in parentheses break up the continuity of the passages and frequently do not explain at all. The use of Yiddish, therefore, comes as a language lesson added to the other formal lessons in the book. Of all the Yiddish words, the use of *mensh* and *goy* as antonyms is the most confusing. The word *goy* is used as a term of derogation, though the actual *goyim* are always referred to as "good *goyim*," making it appear that the only kind of a bad *goy* is a Jew. *Mensh* is used in the sense of "be a *mensh*," as well as "he's only a *mensh*," and "he's a real *mensh*," a bewildering assortment for the uninitiated, since they are all translated alike.

DESPITE the sentimentality and the prejudices, the book can be said to have value as a family photograph, even if it suffers the fate of family photographs. Everyone is in the picture, as well as the house behind, and even the stores down the street. But we can see few faces clearly. The tinting of the whole in pale pink blurs them even more, without adding to their reality. Still, family photographs are seldom discarded. If they cannot withstand the bright living room light, there is always a place for them in the hallway. The fact that the fourth man from the left, two down, the one with the glasses, mustache, and crooked tie, is someone's father, may give it the same meaning for some readers that it has for the author.

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The Ancients

ANCIENT JUDAISM. By MAX WEBER. Translated and edited by HANS H. GERTH and DON MARTINDALE. The Free Press. 484 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by RALPH MARCUS

ONE of my donnish professors used to say that when good German theories die they go to Oxford. He was probably thinking of humanistic studies. Of German theories in social science it would be more accurate to say that they go to the Universities of London, Chicago, and Wisconsin. At any rate this is true of Max Weber's ideas.

Weber's ingenious but imperfect theory that modern capitalism was largely a product of Calvinist Puritanism was publicized, and at the same time criticized, by R. H. Tawney in the early 1920's. And during the past two decades several of his works on economics and on the sociology of Oriental religions have been translated from German into English by various scholars, chiefly in the Midwest. But his work on ancient Judaism, first published in the 1917-1919 volumes of the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft,* and republished as the third volume of his *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* in 1921, soon after his death, has aroused very little interest among English-writing students of ancient Israel. Salo Baron is one of the few exceptions, and one of his criticisms will be noticed below. Even in German there was not, I think, any thorough critique of Weber as a sociologist of religion—as distinct from a social-economic philosopher—before 1931, when Joachim Wach devoted a special appendix to Weber in his *Einführung in die Religionssoziologie.*

Weber's concept of Israelite historical development is, as one would expect, fully in accord with the general philosophy of history of a thinker who, as the editors succinctly put it, "rejected Marx and Nietzsche, although he learned much from both." That is to say that he neither minimized nor exaggerated the importance of the psychological and ethical factors in the life of the ancient Israelites. And though Weber accepted the chief results of Wellhausian textual criticism, he is less rigidly systematic in his treatment of literary sources than are most professional Biblical scholars of the school of Wellhausen.

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Similarly, he depends heavily on the researches of the great German historian of antiquity, Eduard Meyer, but he often refines or amplifies the results of Meyer's researches into the social background of Israelite political history. It is Weber, I think, and not Meyer or another contemporary scholar, who is responsible for suggesting the great variations in the social composition of the Israelite tribes. Again, it seems to be Weber's merit to have documented more fully and flexibly than his predecessors the suggestion that throughout early Israelite history there runs "a dualism of peasant and shepherd."

As AN example of Weber's moderation in applying sociological analysis to religious phenomena one cannot do better than cite the following passage: "The point [about the Mosaic covenant] is not that the life-conditions of Beduins and semi-nomads 'produced' an order whose establishment could be considered as something like the 'ideological exponent' of its economic conditions. This form of historical materialistic construction is here, as elsewhere, inadequate. The point is, rather, that once such an order was established the life-conditions of

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these strata gave it by far the greater opportunity to survive in the selective struggle for existence against the other, less stable political organizations. The question, however, why such an order emerged at all was determined by quite concrete religious-historical and often highly personal circumstances and vicissitudes."

That Weber was immensely learned, commendably honest, and extraordinarily intelligent, all competent critics would probably admit. And that his lack of *expertise* in ancient Judaism (not apparent, by the way, to any but the most searching eye) is pretty well compensated for by his comparative method would also be admitted by all scholars not afflicted with the disease of vested interest. Just as the archeologist who examines the terrain from an airplane is able to detect contours that indicate the existence of buildings which are often invisible to the surface explorer, so the "comparative" sociologist may detect structures in a culture which are invisible or obscure to the scholar who works in only one area. Rationalism and objectivity are also undeniable virtues in approaching controversial fields where prejudices lie sown in the earth like military mines. But, as Wach and other sociologists and historians of religion have pointed out, the thinker who is "religiously unmusical," as Weber with characteristic honesty admitted to being, may substitute perspective for penetration, and may deceive himself into thinking that he has understood the irrational elements that contribute to make up the peculiar genius of a person or group or even type, when he has merely delimited the possibilities of evolutionary linear development.

Conscious that I have not too clearly explained this, I shall take refuge in Wach's brief but illuminating remark that Weber ignores the "transcendent" in religious experience. At the same time I should like to make a concession to Weber's kind of disinterested rationalism by admitting that he has been far more appreciative of Israel's religious experience than, say, the theologically involved Wellhausen, who projected his dislike of 19th-century German Jews on to the ancient Israelites. The more secular Weber has understood the work of priests as well as prophets because he has studied the Bible "with that beautiful, purely secular common sense which can hardly be distinguished in its more inspired moments from a saintly idealism," as Katherine Anne Porter says of E. M. Forster.

LET us turn now to *Ancient Judaism*. Perhaps the first criticism that occurs to an attentive reader is that Weber's terminology is sometimes startlingly inept, as for example in characterizing the Hebrew prophets as "demagogues" and Diaspora Jewry as "a pariah-people." One realizes, to be sure, that by "demagogue" Weber does not mean what most people would suppose him to mean, since he holds the prophet to have been neither a practical politician nor a partisan, but an intellectual intent upon leading the masses to true religion. This severely etymological use of "demagogue" is therefore as inappropriate to its ancient Greek meaning as it is to modern usage. As for "pariah-people," by which Weber means "a ritually segregated guest-people," it is equally inept. To the objection made by Salo Baron that the Jews of the Diaspora had a religion different from that of their host peoples, the editors reply in their preface that "religious differences may sharpen the distinction between guest and host"; but this does not in any way mitigate the ineptness of the term "pariah" as applied to the Jews of the Diaspora. For one thing, the pariahs of India accepted their degradation. The Jews never did. For another, the pariahs of India had no social contact with their hosts. The Jews of the Diaspora did. One might easily find other significant differences, but what has been said here may suffice.

In view of the fact that, as he himself modestly acknowledged, Weber was no expert on Israelite culture, it is remarkable how few errors of fact there are in a book crowded with facts. Two errors can be shown to be so only in the light of recently acquired knowledge. Among the arguments which Weber gives to show that the "ethical Decalogue" (in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5) was composed considerably after the time of Moses is the "fact" that the Hebrew word translated as "covet" in the Tenth Commandment is too abstract for the Mosaic age. But we now know, thanks to

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the discovery of a Phoenician inscription from Cilicia, that as late as about 700 B.C.E. the word in question meant "to lay covetous hands upon." There is therefore no reason to regard the Tenth Commandment as late merely on linguistic grounds. The other instance is Weber's supposition that speculative eschatology, as in Daniel and Enoch, emanated from the uneducated and ritually negligent Jews. We now have the Dead Sea Scrolls to support earlier conjectures that these eschatological writings came from the Essenes.

Over against the remarkably few errors of fact, one may set the many instances of conjectures which have been confirmed, providing evidence of Weber's astonishingly sound judgment. For example, his statement that the Essenes were essentially "a radical sect of Pharisees" is borne out by the evidence of these same Dead Sea Scrolls and the closely related Damascus Covenant. Again, his references to Canaanite influences on Israelite mythology and ritual poetry are supported by the recently discovered Canaanite literature of Ugarit.

He is not, however, uniformly sound. When he denies that the Hebrew prophets were "democratic" he goes counter to much ancient evidence, to much modern opinion, and to some of his own judgments. He grants that the prophets were active fighters for freedom of speech, for freedom of conscience, and for the rights of the poor and submerged classes. He grants that they opposed royal authority and the state priests. In one place he even includes the "free prophets" among "the troublesome democratic crusaders." There seems to be no good reason, therefore, for stressing the fact that the prophets were not democratic, no matter how severely that term is restricted. He has, it is true, made out a pretty good case for the theory that most of the prophets were intellectuals rather than plebeians, but that has nothing to do with their being democratic.

Nor does one readily follow him in asserting rather confidently that "rarely have entirely new religious conceptions originated in the respective centers of rational cultures," including Athens, Alexandria, Rome, Paris, London. But Nippur was both the religious and intellectual center of ancient Babylonia, Athens was the birthplace of what may fairly be called the new religions of Plato and of Zeno the Stoic, Alexandria saw the creation of at least a significant variety of ancient Judaism, namely Hellenistic Judaism, and finally, Jerusalem, which Weber includes among provincial capitals, was both the religious and intellectual center of pre-Exilic as well as post-Exilic Jewry.

THE KEY TO THE BIBLE
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But all these fault-findings are meant chiefly as warnings to the prospective reader not to be carried away too easily by Weber's deservedly high reputation. No one who has occupied himself intensively with the study of Israelite culture can fail to admire the great sweep, the prevailing accuracy, and the true sensitivity of Weber's sociological analysis of ancient Judaism. Regrettably I have not enough space to call attention to the many sections in which the author has revealed new aspects of that culture. I can mention only a few general topics, such as his treatment of the Levitical Torah and his extremely suggestive comparison, throughout several sections, of the Levites and the Brahmins; his excellent discrimination of magical and quasi-magical elements in the religion of Israel in various periods and his explanation of their relative innocuousness; his understanding of the essential healthiness of Israelite religious worldliness; his appreciation of the concrete manifestations of Pharisaic "petty bourgeois" rationalism, of which he recognizes the partially urban character without going to the extremes of characterization to be found in Louis Finkelstein's *Pharisees* (which mentions some of Weber's writings but not his *Ancient Judaism*).

From what has been sketchily indicated above, it should be apparent that even after thirty years, Weber's *Ancient Judaism* is still one of the important and impressive works in the field. For that reason it is good to see an English translation appear. Unfortunately the present translation, while faithful enough on the whole, has too many lapses into infidelity to be easily forgiven. And it has other disconcerting faults. For example, though the editors have enlisted the help of a Hebraist in checking Biblical quotations, one finds that a good many of the original inaccuracies in the tran-

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scription of Hebrew words have been left uncorrected in the English text. One reads *roshi* for *rashe, chelob* for *chebel* or better *khebel, kazir* for *qatzin, gedah* for *'edah*. In other places the German practice has been followed in rendering Hebrew *y* by *j*, and *z* by *s* or the reverse. In one instance, where Weber writes *Jezreel,* meaning *Yisrael* (i.e. Israel), the translators give *Jezreel,* which makes no sense in this passage.

Moreover, the translators sometimes fail to render the German accurately or intelligibly, which, to be sure, is not always easy but is always a responsibility to be taken with the greatest seriousness. Thus, "*David ist des Panzers ungewohnt*" becomes, most disconcertingly, "David is unusual to mail" (p. 25). "*In den zweifellosen Parallelen*" becomes, in defiance of English grammar, which is not too demanding, "in the doubtless parallels." And one is bewildered to find that "the striving of the priests for insurmountable, confessionally discriminating duties of Israel" is meant to render "*das Streben der Priester nach absolut unüberstieglichen 'konfessionellen' Unterscheidungspflichten Israels.*" Would any reader ignorant of German be likely to guess that the original refers to the setting up by the priests of religious obligations meant to form an insurmountable barrier to non-Israelites? Rather seriously misleading is the rendering "prophets of grace" for *Heilspropheten* instead of "prophets of salvation" (the term is correctly rendered elsewhere in the book). And why in the world should Babylonian omen-literature be called "scurrilous" when Weber calls it *monströs*? On the same page *Bilderfeinde* (iconoclasts) is rendered "icon-fiends"! Finally, as examples of the complete reversal of the author's meaning are the renderings "sanctioned" for *straft* (punishes), and "tarrying" for *im Harren* (expectant).

It is a pity that having invested so much labor in their translation, Drs. Gerth and Martindale did not take a little extra trouble and go through the manuscript with a self-critical scrutiny.

It is only fair, however, to add that the editors have made partial amends for the imperfections of their translation by providing useful indexes to the book (characteristically missing in the German original), by writing a preface that briefly and helpfully characterizes the work of Weber and also includes some well-selected references to pertinent literature on Weber and on Israelite culture, and by breaking up the two exhausting sections of the book into a large number of small ones.

What Is American Thought?

THE AMERICAN TEMPER: PATTERNS OF OUR INTELLECTUAL HERITAGE. By RICHARD D. MOSIER. University of California Press. 306 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by DANIEL J. BOORSTIN

AT LEAST since the 18th century, when Crèvecoeur came here from France and asked, What is an American? students of our culture have looked for the characteristically American. This quest has generally taken two forms. First, there have been the naive observers who try to discover what America is by seeing how Americans act. For the most part, these have been foreigners who, because they have paid the price of a long voyage, are inclined to give their observations the importance they deserve. Consequently they are impressed more by our going institutions than by the forms or sources of our thought. This group has included some of the most perceptive and successful characterizers of our culture, beginning with Crèvecoeur himself, and coming down through Mrs. Trollope, Tocqueville, Lord Bryce, and Gunnar Myrdal.

The second class is that of the sophisticated students who have on the whole been more interested in the content of our academic thought than in the character of our national life. The most successful of these—Parrington, for example—have undertaken a strenuous quest for what Parrington called "the genesis and development in American letters of certain germinal ideas that have come to be reckoned traditionally American." Since these writers are usually intellectuals they are inclined to expect that the "characteristically American" is to be detected in books. And since they are themselves often cosmopolites, men of broad culture, they are wont to end (however they may have begun) by equating American life with American philosophy. Their common tendency is to view American culture as a kind of afterlife of European thought.

IN MR. MOSIER'S book, which describes "The American Temper" by way of an account of the four "main creative moments in the mak-

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ing of the American mind," we have a very respectable example of this second class. Through an able description of the nature and sources of American "philosophy" as expressed in "The Puritan Mind," "The American Enlightenment," "The Romantic Mind," and "The Modern [or pragmatic] Temper," the author of this urbane volume attempts to catch the characteristically American spirit. Even if he writes somewhat densely in a purple and obtrusive style, Mr. Mosier does give us a competent and sometimes extraordinarily perceptive exposition of these several schools.

Each phase is presented as a set of related minor premises derived from certain distinctive major premises about God and nature. "The Puritan Mind," he tells us, is essentially the elaboration of the Calvinist maxim, "Man's freedom is God's necessity," with its related concepts of covenant, sin, and the natural order. What Mr. Mosier calls "The American Enlightenment" was in substance the application to American religion, science, and government of the Newtonian world view. In "The Romantic Mind" he recounts the philosophic consequences of transcendentalism, and he explains that "the transcendentalist rhetoric rested at last on the transcendentalist theory of knowledge; and that, largely taken from Coleridge, who had in turn largely taken it from Schelling." "The realm of letters had now to become a province of protest, for a previous age of reason had quite neglected the growth of the understanding. The province of letters had now seized upon the ungainly transcendental purpose, and sought to communicate, while it harmonized, the divergent lisps of former ages, when in the fever of its doubt or in the high conquests of its imagination, it had whispered familiar notions or told unfamiliar truths." Finally, in "The Modern Temper," Mr. Mosier explores the implications of Darwinism for American thought, and especially for pragmatism and the philosophy of John Dewey. These skillful syntheses of the several main currents of sophisticated thought are a notable accomplishment.

But the parts do not add up to the result which Mr. Mosier claims for them. In a word, he does not succeed in uncovering for us a specifically American temper. The trouble, I suspect, is not in the way Mr. Mosier performs his addition so much as in the items he has chosen to put in his equation. In this book we can see some of the obstacles which our ablest historians have put in the way of our discovery of ourselves.

Two emphases appear in Mr. Mosier's book. First, an extreme cosmopolitanism (or rather Europeanism)—a tendency to view American culture as what was happening on one wing of the broad stage of Western European Culture. The second is a tendency to attach a disproportionate, almost an exclusive, significance to "high culture," to metaphysical foundations and articulate or systematic thought. The first tendency appears in his treatment of the American Puritan Mind as a variant of European Calvinism (with an admixture of Cambridge Platonism and other doctrines), of the American Enlightenment as a New World expression of Newtonianism, of American Romanticism as a reformulation of Kant, Schelling, Coleridge, and others, and of the Modern Temper as a domestication of Darwin in the United States. Although Mr. Mosier does not neglect to mention some peculiarly American circumstances, nevertheless the reader gets the unmistakable impression that the seminal sources are transatlantic. Mr. Mosier's emphasis on high culture appears not only in his choice of what he takes to be the most philosophically "creative" moments as the touchstones of American thought, but in his understandable fascination with the architecture of these four systems of thought. But one cannot fail to marvel that so much can truthfully be said about American "thought" and yet tell us so little about American thinking.

The study of American variants on the great European thinkers is in itself neither a very profitable nor a very interesting enterprise. It becomes a study of discipleship, of the reformulation, the watering down, and the distillation of ideas more forceful in the words of the great masters themselves. How insignificant the American branch of the family looks when Jefferson and Rush are reduced to intellectual grandchildren of Newton, or Emerson and Thoreau to nephews of Hegel and Kant! The difficulty which stands in the way of a serious and thoroughly self-respecting effort to treat Jefferson and Emerson as heads of families in their own right is the gnawing suspicion (which Emerson himself uncovered over a century ago) that intellectual, like political, royalty is established only by proof of blood relationship with the existing ancient families of Europe.

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May it not be that one of the peculiar characteristics of the American Temper is that it has not been readily expressed in the systems which our philosophers have been able to make for us, but rather in the institutions and opportunities among which our philosophers have lived? And that the features of our life which have produced an "American Temper" have also produced a lack of great or original philosophers? One moral of the hunting expedition on which Mr. Mosier has taken us may be that if indeed there exists a creature of the kind that he has invited us to look for, it does not live in this particular thicket.

The Integrity of George Orwell

SUCH, SUCH WERE THE JOYS. By GEORGE ORWELL. Harcourt, Brace. 230 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by IRVING HOWE

EACH time another posthumous book by Orwell appears one is depressed at remembering that it has been stitched together from stray remnants; and then, impressed at how well those remnants keep. About the title piece in this latest collection, which first appeared in *Partisan Review* a year ago, little need be said except that it is a masterpiece. Orwell set himself the apparently simple task of recalling exactly, without the blur of adult retouching, what it had been like to attend an English "public school" between the ages of eight and twelve. I say, apparently simple, for anyone who has tried to write this kind of memoir, or has read the efforts of American literary men to recapture their pasts, must know how treacherous this genre can be.

The problem in such memoirs is to keep the adult person distinct from the remembered child, to prevent oneself from smuggling, or melting, adult reflections into the adolescent mind. And this is extremely difficult, not merely because few of us can reach into the blackness of the past and find again the forgotten child, but because few of us are willing to let him be once we have found him. If you read the semi-autobiographical efforts of American writers, you frequently find that they are cheating—not their readers, who should be able to catch them out with a fifth of an eye—but themselves. They feel a need to add a buzz of sensibility, a further touch of childhood horror, a quiver of pathos; and just this little improvement spoils everything.

Orwell avoided these mistakes. He avoided them not merely because he happened to be a highly gifted writer but because he had somehow solved the problem of the self. In his autobiographical pieces he was beyond the need for self-praise, self-pity, or self-aggrandizement; he did not transform a private recollection into a public imperialism; and he was immune to that complacent pomp which so often accompanies American literary talk about the "sacredness of the individual personality." Orwell was not a saint, and from his writings one may surmise that he must often have been irritable and with regard to certain literary matters, rather dense. But he was what he was; he didn't persuade himself into the role of Kafka or Blake. As a result, his recollections of his school years form a beautifully balanced and moving piece of writing, full of sympathy for the boy he once was yet without any glorification of that boy's neurotic devices.

It is tempting, and useful, to suppose that Orwell's capacity for selflessness was partly due to his deep immersion in the European experience, his participation in the Spanish war, his socialism, his rejection of aesthetic jabber; it is tempting particularly when one remembers that so many of his American counterparts are now likely to be writing aggrieved compositions on why Europe doesn't love us any more. The difference, I am sure, must count for something, for in Orwell you feel the bone-weariness, the splitting pain of living through disaster after disaster. He was at the center of modern experience, yet this can hardly be the whole explanation for his qualities: Koestler was also at the center of modern experience.

THE remaining pieces in *Such, Such Were the Joys* include some sensitive reporting on North Africa and Spain in which Orwell demonstrates his yearning to identify with the poor and the miserable as well as his pained recognition that, as an intellectual, he cannot finally be one of them; a long literary essay on Henry Miller in which he wildly yet profitably overestimates that writer by praising him for the anarchistic and bohemian "irresponsibility" which sets every respectable liberal's teeth on edge; and several political essays.

Orwell had the primary equipment necessary for political writing in our age: a strong nose. He was not, however, a very powerful analyst

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This *I Believe*

By Frank W. Abrams

Chairman of the Board, Standard Oil Company (New Jersey)

". . . INCREASING numbers of business managers, I believe, feel that corporations should not take substantial benefits from their membership in the economic community while avoiding the normally accepted obligations of citizenship in the social community.

"This widening sense of social consciousness is disclosed in many ways: enlightened employee policies, openness in relations with shareholders, greater participation in community efforts. Here I want to talk about still another area, that of business contributions to private educational institutions.

". . . Education, more and better education, is needed if we are to maintain that most cherished of man's works—a free society. More than ever before, men today need to know how to think; to weigh and appraise; to achieve the steadiness of vision and purpose that wisdom brings.

"The circle of problems that besets the American people is ever widening, calling in ever sterner tones for maturity and good judgment in their solution. Unless we have prudent and mature people on whom we can rely, great dangers are ahead for the general well-being of the country, and, incidentally, for stockholders' investments in corporations.

"The direct benefits are more evident.

"The task of management is becoming increasingly complicated, requiring a wide diversity of talents and training. We must look more and more to institutions of higher learning for the men and women we need. Corporations pay the colleges and universities little or nothing for training the personnel which they now eagerly recruit each June. I am convinced that American business neither needs nor wants a free ride, least of all from our private educational institutions, which we know to be hard pressed financially.

". . . It is particularly important for us to retain a strong and vigorous group of private institutions of higher learning. The independent liberal arts college especially must be preserved in its full vigor. So-called liberal or general education is essential to the kind of free society in which business moves ahead and prospers. Maintaining the private liberal arts college as a genuinely independent institution, I believe, is indispensable to our way of life. For freedom rests on the competition of free choice, both in the business world and in the world of ideas.

". . . It is appropriate to predict that business management will continue to enlarge its social vision; and that business contributions, including those to education, will become an important aspect of this enlarging viewpoint. The interests of the stockholders of the corporations of America require no less."

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on the secondary level, the level of fine but necessary discrimination. Partly this was the result of having been imbued, from birth, with that typical English empiricism which has so many moral advantages and intellectual drawbacks: the empiricism which clings fanatically to the theory that theoretical statements are useless, even nasty, in politics. He was a 19th-century anarcho-liberal, and this was a position that made it possible for him to resist the tyrannies of our time but hardly to analyze them with much finesse. He knew what to reject in bulk—which was tremendously important; but we need to know more than that.

And then, I suspect, something else happened to him. Orwell was so frequently praised for his honesty and integrity—as if he were a teetotaler who shamed the alcoholics—that without having succumbed to literary vanity he seems to have fallen back upon his integrity at times when more than integrity was needed. The integrity, real and impressive as it was, became, in some of his political pieces, an insular impatience with ideas that seemed to him strange and suspicious.

I have in mind one quite bad essay in this book called "Notes on Nationalism." On the face of it, the essay sets out to do a useful job of deflating the excessive claims of modern ideology, but Orwell tends, rather too comfortably, to take the simple stand of "a plague on all your houses" which gives both him and the reader large quantities of emotional pleasure but does not make for precise thinking. In drawing up a list of "negative" nationalisms he mentions Anglophobia, anti-Semitism, and Trotskyism; in drawing up a list of "positive" nationalisms he cites neo-Toryism, Celtic nationalism, and Zionism. Orwell knew, of course, that the ideas of these various movements were vastly different but he felt they had significant traits in common because all were fanatical ideologies, whether in terms of "negative" opposition or "positive" allegiance. Is there, however, any point in assimilating the fanatical imperialism of a neo-Tory with the fanatical anti-imperialism of an Irish nationalist or the desire of a Zionist for a Jewish state? Does it make any sense, is there any practical use, in putting the Trotskyists' fanatical (because "premature"?) hatred of Stalinism in the same category as . . . anti-Semitism? What does this illuminate or clarify? Isn't it rather an example of gross political insensitivity?

Liberalism in our day is in a bad state, but surely it has more to offer than a condemnation of political movements in proportion to the *intensity* of the allegiance they command; surely it has more to offer than an essentially philistine condemnation of ideology in general, both the ideology of oppressors and the ideology of the oppressed.

In the end, Orwell's integrity did save him from the consequences of relying on it too often and too heavily. The essays in this book are remarkable for avoiding the cant which has recently spread like a gray blanket over English and American literary life. Orwell knew that as a literary man he could escape neither the imprint nor the necessity of politics. There is something refreshing in his remark that "looking back through my work, I see that it is invariably when I lacked a *political* purpose that I wrote lifeless books and was betrayed into purple passages. . . . " Orwell resisted the fashionable junk of the literary bazaar: the clatter about *the* individual, the jargon about "creativity," the panting after religiosity, the posturings of the literary tough guys with metaphors as hard as their muscles, the dreariness of the myth-addicts, and all the rest. What helped him a great deal was his strong plebeian sense of reality; what helped him even more was that he was that rarity of rarities, a genuinely good man. But his goodness became publicly meaningful and could be embodied in a major work only because he was also a desperate man. It was the two together, and neither alone, that made possible *Nineteen Eighty-four*.

Book Reviewers in This Issue

Robert Gorham Davis is associate professor of English at Smith College.

Sylvia Rothchild's stories of Jewish life have appeared frequently in our pages.

Ralph Marcus is a professor in the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

Daniel J. Boorstin's article "Our Unspoken National Faith" appeared in our April issue.

Irving Howe is the author of books on Sherwood Anderson and William Faulkner.

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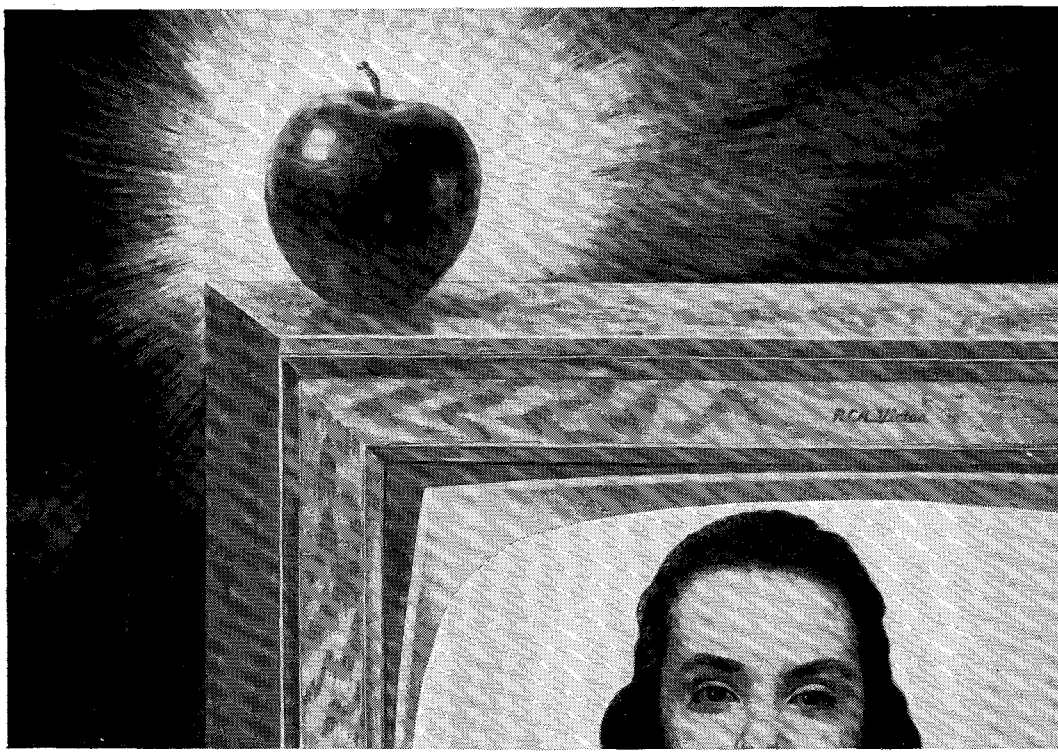

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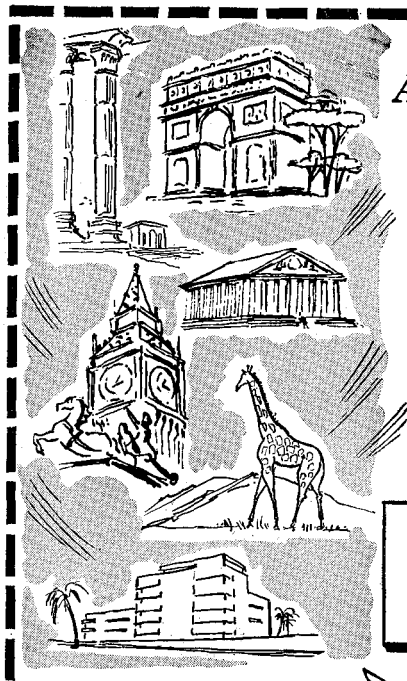

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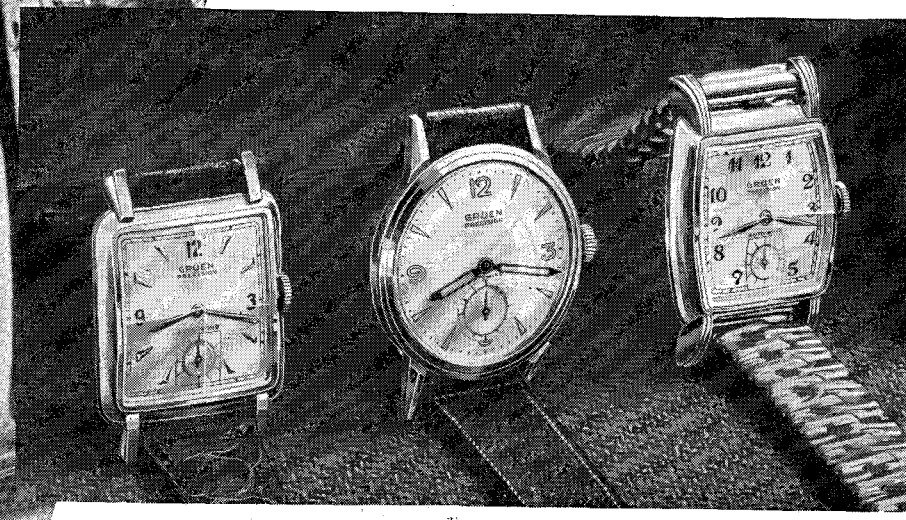

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